

ONCE A WEEK



WHERE IS THE OTHER?—A REVERIE.

RELICS seen in lat. 69° 09' N., long. 99° 24' W :

Not brought away. 30th May, 1859, * * * * * a small worsted-work slipper (lined with calf-skin, bound with red ribbon). * * * * * CAPTAIN M'CLINTOCK'S *Despatch*.



"JANE, JANE! George is coming down to spend three weeks here—it will be so jolly! And he's going to bring his brother too. You must make us some sailors out of dolls for our yacht; mother will give us the blue cloth, and Susan said I might have some of the pieces out of the rag-bag for the trousers. You'll make them, won't you, Jane? George won't mind; he'll be here three weeks, so you'll see enough of him."

Jane promised to turn tailor, and kept her promise; and when George and his brother arrived, they found the yacht ready, and the men at their posts in their best trim.

"Here, William, you go with Tom to the pond; I'll come another time."

The boys went, and Jane was alone with George.

"There's something the matter, George, I can see it in your face."

"Yes, Jenny, there is; I'm going a long voyage. You know, Jenny, I was to have gone to Calcutta, but when your father said what he did—you remember?—I made up my mind to get on faster. I'm going with Franklin—three years, perhaps—but it will be the making of all of us who come back, so you mustn't mind, Jenny; time will soon go by, and I shall be able when I come back to find a nest for you—little wren."

He spoke hurriedly as though to prevent her speaking.

She sobbed out, "Three years, George? Not see you for three years! It's very cruel—it's very hard."

"No, Jenny, not 'cruel,' not 'hard.' It's sure to make my fortune, and I might work in the ordinary way *ten years* before I satisfied your father."

"But surely, George, you could do something on shore, if not at sea, to prevent this terrible separation. Can't you be a clerk, or something? You draw nicely—much better than old Mr.

Sumner at Miss Hilditch's. Can't you give lessons, or do anything? I'm sure you could, so clever as you are, do something."

"My dear Jenny, you don't understand these things. When a man has once chosen his profession or trade, he had better stick to it; he'll have so much to learn in his new calling; so many competitors, that it's a hundred to one if he succeeds. I chose to go to sea like a fool—I've learnt my business like a man—and I mean to keep to it like a wise man. There now, Jenny, only three years and it's all done—money and fame in three years! Cheer up! don't make it worse for me, for I feel it not a little."

She saw he did feel it by the gathering moisture of his eye.

"After all, it's for the best, Jenny, dear."

So said Jane's father; so said her mother: and she?—she was silent.

The three weeks soon passed—too soon. Poor Jenny tried hard to be cheerful, but now and then would look at the fine handsome face of her lover and feel it so hard that he must go away for so long—

And dearer still he grew, and dearer,
E'en as the parting hour grew nearer.

The last day came, and her mother contrived to leave them alone together more than was customary; "his last day," she said, and called to mind her own experience of some five-and-twenty years ago. Jenny bore her burden bravely. Not a tear was seen except by George—he was quieter than usual.

"You won't sail on a Friday, George? I think it's such a bad day; so many ships are lost that sail on Fridays."

"I don't know, I'm sure; but I don't really think it makes much difference, Friday or any other day."

"But it is unlucky, and I dreamt this morning of a wedding, and all the people were in white. It's dreadfully unlucky, that it is."

"Why, what a little goose it is; why is that unlucky?"

"I don't know, but they say it is."

"Who says so?"

"Old Mrs. Crace; and her husband was a sailor—"

And here Jenny looked as if she would like to say something more.

"Well! say on, Jenny."

"I've got something for you—it will keep you from being drowned;" and her little hand was inserted in her pocket, and brought out as its captive a small bag of silk, with cord enough to go round the neck, attached.

"What is it, dearest?"

"I can't tell you; but, indeed, she said it would prevent your being drowned. Do wear it. Her husband always wore one, and he died in her arms, as I should like you to die in mine, if you must die first. Do wear it?"

"O yes, I'll wear it; but you can tell me what it is, aye? What is it?" And he looked into her face. "Come, tell me."

"It was old Mrs. Crace gave it me; she's been attending Charlotte Golding, who was married this

time last year; she said, she was sure it was a good thing, and made me promise to give it you, so I made the bag, and here it is. Do wear it."

"Certainly I will, as I'd wear anything you'd like me to; but still I should like to know what this charm is."

"Old Mrs. Crace said that the doctor laughed at her when she told him about her husband having one."

"Old Mrs. Crace!—the doctor! Why, what does it mean! O, I see! how stupid I am. Mrs. Golding has a baby, hasn't she? Ah, yes! I understand. I'll wear it."

"Thanks, dear George. She says, she's sure her husband would have been drowned if it hadn't been for that."

"Now, George, my boy, the chaise is here; come along."

He came out of the room, she clinging to him, and shook hands with them all and went down stairs.

"Don't look back—don't look back;" and one after another the shoes of the sisters are thrown after him for luck.

"Look out, George!" said his brother William from the top of the stairs, "here's Jane's coming!" and he seized the slipper from her foot and flung it.

George heard him, and turned.

"There, Jane, he's caught the slipper, and kissed it, and taken it with him."

"Oh! William! William! you've killed me! He looked back, and you made him. Oh! my God! my God! he's gone—quite gone, now! I shall never see him again!—never!—never!" and Jenny sank into their arms fainting.

* * *

"What made you promise Arabella that beautiful orange-blossom wreath? you'll want it when he comes home."

"No, Charlotte, I shall never want it; he'll never come back. Old Mrs. Crace said one day, before he left, it was a sure sign of bad luck if the shoe did not strike the person on the back; but that if he looked back it was worst of all. I didn't throw mine, for fear, and then for William to do it! O dear! it makes me so sad."

"Nonsense, child! he'll come back soon enough. You'll just be two-and-twenty, that's a year younger than I was when I married Mr. Golding."

"No, Charlotte! he'll never come back!—never! Oh! William! William!"

"Don't be silly; what has that to do with it? I've no patience with you giving away all your nice things."

* * *

Time passed; three years went by, and Jane was paler. The winter of '48 had come; Jane had learned to hate snow—had grown irritable—unsociable; slapped the children; scolded the servants; read many tracts on the vanity of life, and talked of joining the chapel, to her father's great indignation. One of her sisters had been married; Jane had said spiteful things about her; Jane was not a family favourite; Jane was unhappy; the more she read the worse she became.

Just then a wealthy suitor of the old school

tried to arrange a match with her, through her father, who was willing enough, but she snubbed him most unmercifully; she knew George would not come home to claim her, and yet she would be constant.

"49 came; Jane was worse. "Try a London doctor." She came to London—saw the doctor, a queer, abrupt man. When she went in, he looked at her a long while without speaking.

"Well, what's the matter with you?"

"She's no appetite, and—" began the mother.

"Let her speak. Let her speak herself. What's the matter with you?"

"I don't know, sir," and the tears stood in her eyes.

"No. I don't suppose you do. I do, though. I like your face and head—ring that bell, will you?"

"John, tell your mistress I wish to see her."

She came.

"This young lady is coming to tea with you this evening; send the brougham to fetch her, will you?"

"Certainly, I will. What time, dear?"

"Settle that yourselves, only let me know. You'll spare her, I'm sure, madam; and this day week call here again with her. She'll be better then. Good morning."

"No fee, too," said Mrs. Vaughan, as they walked homewards.

Jane went to tea, and found the physician's wife all that she looked for and longed for, a friend and comforter. She was stout, as English matrons only can be, without a trace of vulgarity; her manner and voice, gentle and winning in the extreme; and from her dark eyes there shone a light that made Jane feel, "Oh, if she had been my mother, I could tell her all;" and in a little while the poor child felt those arms round her, and her tears wiped away as she told her piteous tale of poor George. She felt almost happy again, for the first time for nearly four years, as this loving, tender woman soothed her.

"Your malady is mental," she said to Jane, "I know, for my husband" (it went to Jane's heart to hear the love and pride expressed in those words; she sighed as she thought that she might have said them herself, if he had come home), "my husband sometimes treats his patients as he has you; not very often though, dear. I don't wonder at his liking you. What did he say?"

"He said he liked my face and head. I never heard anybody say they liked my head before. He—"

"Well, what about him?" said Dr. Burnett, who had just entered. "What does the J stand for? Julia? You don't look like a Julia."

"Jane, sir."

"Ah! nice name. You're in love. I can't do you any good unless I know how to advise you. If you like to tell Mrs. Burnett and myself about it, perhaps we can do you some good then. It's no use giving you drugs."

Poor Jane! She could feel he was in earnest, and kind, too, with all his abrupt way, and she told them her tale again with many tears.

"Poor child!" he said, stroking her hair. "Poor child! your troubles come upon you very young, too. How do you amuse yourself?"

"I'm so wretched, I never care to."

"What do you read? Chiefly religious books, and then feel miserable because you don't attain to the condition of mind described in some of them? Sad blunder. Now listen to me. Your nature is not the kind to find happiness in contemplation alone; you must be active, and forget your sorrow in labour of some kind. All natures are not alike, and if you were to read and pray all day long, you'd be miserable still. You're not formed for it; some are. You're superstitious and silly; that slipper story shows no wisdom on your part. You must get over this; read George Combe's book—there's a cheap edition, and be active; do good, not outside, but at-home; there's plenty for a willing mind to do in any family such as yours. You must find your happiness in making others happy. Get to some good mental exercise for about two or three hours a day. Try and learn German; play chess; and, above all, burn that diary you write in every night. You did not tell me about it, but I know it. Bad plan—very—too much looking inside does no good—burn it—don't keep another. Don't allow your mind to dwell upon your great trouble—he may come back. You shake that head of yours as though it were impossible. All nonsense about the slipper; and when he does, you'll be better fitted to take care of him, if you do these things, than if you moan and fret yourself into the grave. Another thing. Try cold baths and the skipping-rope, backwards and forwards. There ought to be a skipping society, with prizes, to encourage that most healthy exercise, as there's a society for everything now. Don't misunderstand me. I want you to take plenty of exercise. You may read religious books, if you like; but don't neglect these other matters, as you have done in time past. Now I must go. You can stay here with my wife as long as you agree. Good night, my child."

Poor Jane was heard to say that she was happier that evening than she had been before or since, except the night that she walked home with George from—and Jane said no more then.

"What's come to Jane, I wonder? She's not slapped me for a month—not even when I upset the ink all over her letter to Mrs. Burnett."

"I don't know, Miss Ellen," said Susan, "but she's just as good-tempered and kind as she used to be before Mr. George went away, only she seems to be different like,—like as though she didn't care for anything."

Alas! poor Jane! She would not think of her absent one; from morning till night she was always employed. Her father noticed the change, and, with the dulness peculiar to some men, supposed she had forgotten George, and with the rest of the world thought him dead. He spoke to the rejected suitor, who again pressed his claims, and murmured something about "comfortable home," "father's consent," "not a young man but healthy," "great respect," "admiration," "love for her," "if Miss Jane would take him he'd be

very happy." She heard him this time patiently, and he began to feel that his eloquence was irresistible, the more so that he saw the handkerchief to her eyes.

"Mr. Smithson, I am really very sorry, but I can't do what you ask. I am very much obliged to you for your kind feeling, but I can't be your wife. Though I'm sure I shall never see George again, I love him, and I would not marry any man unless I loved him alone. Don't ask me again. You have known me since I was a little girl that you used to take on your knee—don't, for my sake, ask me again—I must refuse. Let us be friends," and she held out her hand. He took it.

"My dear Miss Vaughan—my dear Jane, I'm very sorry; I didn't know this—I respect you very much—I—I—if you can't be my wife you must be my daughter. I bought this for my wife, as I thought, I'll give it to my daughter. There, don't say a word more, there's a good girl. I'll see your father."

"And mother, please," said Jane.

"Oh, yes, and your mother too."

He left, and Jane found on the table a handsome gold watch and chain, and Jane wore it, and walked with Mr. Smithson to church next Sunday, and when he came of an evening made his favourite mixture for him; and he, in return, got for her all the information relative to the expedition. Never heard the name of Franklin mentioned in the papers, but he worried the Admiralty till they sent him the latest particulars in an envelope with a very large seal.

So passed the time. One by one her younger sisters grew up and found in Jane a friend and confidante. One by one they told her woman's great secret—they were loved and they loved. She saw them happy brides and mothers, and not a word of envy did they hear. She nursed their children, worked for their husbands, advised on all matters—*when asked*—and became a sun to the circle that was about her, so that "Aunt Jane's coming!" was a cry that brought joy to many little hearts, as well as a sense of peace and repose to older ones. But there was one group among them that was pre-eminently her care. His brother William married, and his children afterwards knew that to Aunt Jane he was indebted for almost everything. She made him the man he was; encouraged, helped him, as only a sensible woman can help a young man; and in William's house Aunt Jane was a household god.

She had strange ways, too, had Aunt Jane; she hated snow: nothing would induce her to see it. She would sit in her own room all the time it was on the ground, with candles instead of daylight; and once, when little George brought her a snowball he had made, she burst into tears and sent him away, and was not herself again for a long time. Strange, too, her fancy for the sea; she would in the spring time go to the sea-side, to an unfrequented fishing village, and stay in the sea-worn cavities in the rocks for hours. Once, some one heard her murmur, "He can't be drowned—he can't be drowned!" and reported that she was mad. She smiled when she heard of it, and asked her little

George whether *he* thought so. He wished everybody was, if she was, she was so kind—there was a man with such nice little boats on the beach: might he have one?

He had his boat—and she was mad, they said.

Poor Aunt Jane, one winter, was not well, and the children missed her much: no fingers like Aunt Jane's to dress dolls, make kites, or mend clothes. No dance-music was like hers: everybody else got tired so soon; she would play for an hour at a time; she never danced except with children. And now here was Christmas and no Aunt Jane—it was not like Christmas at all.

She lay down, never to rise again: they were horror-stricken to find how thin she was. One evening—it was Christmas Eve—she said to them, "Is there any snow?"

"Yes; it's nearly a foot deep."

"Open the window—curtains, and let me see it."

"You'd better not," they urged; "it will make you so ill."

"No; it will do me good, now. I shall not see it again."

The sun was just on the horizon, and his deep red light, as the winter's fog hung about him, shone on the snow till it was snow no longer. It was a soft covering of warm red—it was the summer of winter—all was warm with his light.

"Lift me up to see it: that will do. I wonder how it looks where he is. I've heard that it's very beautiful. William, take care of this," and she gave him from under her pillow a parcel in white paper. "You know what it is; and take this letter to Dr. Burnett, and see him, will you? Now bid me good-bye, all of you."

They would not leave her.

"Do, I ask it as a favour. Do, I shall not ask many more. Come, kiss me now, and leave me. I should like to die alone, as perhaps he did—as perhaps he did. *Do go.*"

At last they went, one by one, slowly, William last.

"William, dear."

"Jane."

"I forgive you now. Only listen to what Dr. Burnett says, will you? Kiss me once more: now go. * * * He would die of cold—perhaps alone. I will join him by the same road—of cold, and alone."

She rose with great effort, and moved to the window; the sun was nearly lost, the warm hues of red had gone, a dull heavy purple had their place. She opened the window wide, and let the cold blast blow upon her, murmuring, "Of cold, and alone! of cold, and alone! God, forgive me! It's but a few hours less, and life is so weary. —Of cold, and alone!"

They came in soon, and found her dead. She had gone his road—cold, and alone!—with a sweet smile upon her pale thin face.

* * * *

"You're the person to whom this letter refers, sir, I presume?"

"I am, sir."

"Well, sir, you're a man now, and, to judge by your looks, a sensible one, and can there-

fore take a little advice from an older man. Jane was quite right, sir : you killed her."

"Oh ! Dr. Burnett !"

"You did, sir. Mind, I don't blame you for her death ; it was a boy's trick, and the only blame attaching to you is for that trick ; but look at its results. But for that, she would have been alive now ; not happy, but hopeful. You destroyed her hope, and killed her. I know you'll say that it had nothing to do with his fate, and so on ; but remember that we are different, sir, one from another. That turning back of his, as he went away, had no effect on your mind, nor would it have on mine, but *she* was so constituted that anything of the kind would exercise a powerful influence. Superstitious to a fault, still there was the fact, and it was like a death-blow to her when that happened. There's much to be learned yet, sir, of even our phy-

sical differences : one man is poisoned by what another man takes with impunity. So in our mental differences, there's much more to be learned—very

much more ; and until this knowledge is ours, we must deal with facts, faults or no faults. The superstition is silly—puerile ; still it existed, and should at that time have been respected. She died through it, sir, I firmly believe. Come and see me any time you like : I shall always be glad to see a friend of hers."

He offered his hand, and as William felt its grasp, he knew how small was his share of blame in the doctor's eyes.

William is, at this time, regarded as one of the most considerate of men.

* * * *

One is in the midst of eternal snows and ice,—perhaps looked upon for the last time. The *other* ! Has William it still ? If not—Where is the other ?

A. STEWART HARRISON.



A SUBURBAN FAIR.



OUR neighbourhood is particularly genteel, — Grove especially so; the semi-detached villas are as much alike as two peas, and the laburnums and lilac-trees in our front gardens interchange their branches over the dwarf party-wall as affectionately as young school-girls interlace their arms. Close to us there is a field, long since devoted to ground-rents if builders would only prove agreeable; possibly, however, the “carcass” of a most desirable residence, with its exposed rafters like bleaching ribs, hard by, warns them off the ground. Be that as it may, the proprietor, evidently hard up for some return, lately let it,—for what purpose the Grove speedily knew.

My back bedroom window commands a view of the corner of the ground over the cropped lime-trees of No. 6. We had been aware for some hours of a highly feverish condition of the neighbourhood by the constant passing of what ladies call “ugly-looking fellows:” but when I began to dress for dinner I was enabled to diagnose the complaint at once, for, between the aforesaid lime-trees, a painted canvas slowly rose between the slings, and by-and-by presented the bold proportions of a giant in a blue coat, gilt buttons, and knee breeches, with an admiring spectator by way of contrast, measuring on tip-toe the proportions of his resplendent calves. “A fair, by all that’s wonderful!” I exclaimed; at the same time groaning heavily, more, I must confess, however, for my neighbours’ genteel feelings than for my own.

Before the dinner was over the thing was in full swing,—the big drum, the trombone, and the clarionet of the principal show had got into full discord; a dozen gongs were a going, and there was a dwarf for certain, for I could hear his bell ringing out of the bed-room window of his doll’s house as plainly as though I saw it. By eight o’clock our Grove was vocal, and every head was

out of window watching the full swing of the fair. Of course I could do no less than inspect the general nuisance that, toadstool-like, had sprung up so suddenly in our midst.

There is nothing more remarkable in a great city than the facility with which any due attraction will gather together strange and unlooked-for elements of the population. Let but a few yards of ice appear, and straightway an army of "roughs" spring out of the earth, and here they were without any notice in full force at our fair,— "a perfect disgrace to the neighbourhood," as the whole Grove declared.

And why is it, I ask myself, standing in the midst of the hubbub, that we have so suddenly discovered that fairs are such sinks of iniquity and folly? Why should we scorn the classes below us for their love of dwarfs and giants, whilst Tom Thumb has been flourishing at the West End, and all May Fair has been running after the Talking Fish? It may be painful, no doubt, to contemplate that sea of unwashed faces just now gazing on that painted canvas, representing the murderer Good cutting up his victim; but, if I recollect rightly, fair ladies pitied him whilst in prison, made his toilet with white roses for the scaffold, and accepted locks of his Newgate crop: the tastes of the populace are no doubt strong, but they are not a whit more silly in the main than those of their betters. Just in the midst of this reflection, a sharp crack across the shins with a stick warned me that I had come across the path of that ducal pastime, Aunt Sally, and that musing in a fair is a very unprofitable business. Custom is doubtless fast ebbing away from the great out-of-door amusements of the populace, and fairs among the number, gay with streamers, bright with inexhaustible life and character, which never seemed to tire the pencils of Ostade or Teniers, are now hunted about like so much "varmint." Nevertheless, in their present insignificant proportions they are picturesque and animated sights. As I watched, the blazing naphtha lamps swinging before every show, and streaming in sputtering tails of flame, light up the restless, moving crowd, in the midst of which, like vast paddle-wheels, the roundabouts with roaring, living freights, emerge from, and return into the dark air above. More tumultuous, and not less noisy, are the boat-swings, urged by half a dozen lusty fellows, who hurled, with evident enjoyment, shrieking cargoes of affrighted women higher and higher into the dusky air. As a background to this lively movement rose the painted wall of canvas spread by the different shows. Here, as in the larger outer world, outside appearances make up for the poverty within. There was a gigantic Bengal tiger depicted struggling frantically with a huge boa, which has taken as many coils round its victim's body as a hawser might round a capstan—the modest truth inside dwindling down to a common snake, which the showman for warmth's sake kept inside his Jersey! Next door was the Theatre Royal, on the stage of which a haughty cavalier condescended to dance a measure with a charmer in spangled pink, who retired now and then out of public observation, to suckle a baby. Neither must I forget the only touch of

the "fancy" to be found in the fair—the sparring booth of the Finchley Bantam—the Bantam himself, a little man, with a diabolical squint and an ugly-looking pair of biceps, politely inviting the biggest man in the fair to come up and have a round with him, an invitation which nobody seemed in a hurry to accept. Every caravan, even to the meanest, was carefully painted and got up, so as to resemble a little house; there was the street door with the panels picked out in different colours, and the inevitable bright brass knocker, whilst the windows boasted wire blinds and curtains of the whitest dimity, with here and there a flower-pot on the window-ledge. Do these wandering Arabs of our population thus endeavour to deceive themselves into the belief that they are householders, like other people? What do they want of knockers, when they are but too happy to throw open their doors to all comers? I ventured to interrogate a gentleman in a velvet shooting-coat on this head, who relieved a persistent attack upon a black pudding, by now and then mechanically giving a left-hander to his drum; but he crustily replied that perhaps I had better walk in and ax, and taking the hint, I soon found myself in an interior, carpeted with the natural turf.

The assembled company were intently inspecting the contents of a corner cupboard full of the wax-work effigies of murderers, one or two of the more curious climbing up to inspect the clothes and the rope of one particular malefactor, warranted by his hangman (under his own hand and seal) to have formed his veritable execution dress.

Without any prefatory address, the showman entered, put back a sliding shutter, and winding up some moaning machinery with a bed-key, introduced us to "what had been pronounced to be the most splendid piece of mechanical wax-work in Europe." The subject, Daniel in the Lions' Den. The prophet mildly revolved his head and worked his eyes, and the lions as mildly opened their jaws, and when they were not so employed they lashed their tails: there was some trifling derangement of the machinery, for some of the tails went off with irregular jerks quite out of time. In the midst of the awful suspense created by this highly dramatic position, a kind of cock-loft door in the den suddenly opened, and the head of King Darius was projected through to see how matters were getting on; but finding that the prophet and the lions were on such exceedingly good terms, he gesticulated wildly for a moment, and then shut the door with a slam, which set the audience a-laughing. The other waxwork represented the Death of Nelson. The hero, according to the showman, is "represented falling into the arms of 'Ardy, having been shot in the 'eat of the fight." A fracture in the abdominal region of the waxwork, however, had unfortunately doubled the hero up upon himself. The audience, however, saw nothing ludicrous at all in the representation: he was the popular hero still, and many a rough fellow listened whilst an old sailor behind me recounted where he lost his eye, and when his arm was smashed in the great sea-fight. The Death-bed of Napoleon followed, and there was more eye-rolling work; and, as a final effort of

mechanical genius, the imperial jaw dropped, which movement being a little too strong for me, I left.

All the while a continual fusillade was being maintained by the rifle-galleries and nut-hawkers. Of the former, there were no less than nine in full work. The process was safe and simple: at the end of a tube a foot in diameter and thirty-five feet long, was the brilliantly-illuminated bull's-eye, which, on being struck, rung a bell; the bell kept going all the evening, so I should advise the Emperor to keep civil. In front of each gallery there was a pictorial screen. The proprietor must have had very decided Whig tendencies, inasmuch as his pictures illustrated the life of Dutch William; and one drawing particularly struck me—"William the Third consigning the Duke of Gloucester to the care of Bishop Burnet." I cannot say that the spectators took much advantage by this effort at inculcating history, inasmuch as I overheard a costermonger asking a "pal" if it didn't represent the Prince of Wales talking to Cardinal Wiseman! By far the most familiar representation, however, referred to Indian massacres,—Sepoys throwing babies up in the air and catching them on the points of their bayonets, as

calmly as though they were playing cup and ball. The Cawnpore Massacre again figured largely, proving the interest the people take in contemporary events. In revenge, Nana Sahib, as the bull's-eye, suffered indescribable agony the whole night, and yielded in return abundant nuts and—nightmares.

I must not omit to mention the canvas avenue of toys and gingerbread nuts—that fairy land of our boyhood some quarter of a century ago. There was the same eager inquiry, in shrill falsetto, "Will you take a nut, sir?" that leads one back to the days of George IV., when fairs were fairs, and society recognised amusements on a level with the tastes of the working-classes, instead of destroying them all for the sake of third-rate Athenæums, with which the bulk of the people have nothing to do. During the hours I spent in our fair, I must candidly confess that I saw no impropriety or ill-behaviour whatever,—a statement which much surprised our churchwarden, who called upon me next morning with a memorial to enable the parish to get rid of what he was pleased to term "the scum of the earth," and that sink of iniquity—our Fair.

CURIO.

THE GHOST'S NIGHT-CAP.



Just thirty years ago—that is to say in the month of November, 1829—an English family, named Daubville, was in occupation of an old Italian villa on the Leghorn Hills. It is to be regretted that the Daubvilles wrote "Honourable" before their name, because any reader with a soul above that *animula vagula, blandula*, which animates the tidy form of an Irish waiting-woman, must be so heartily sick of the aristocratic eidolons which pervade our modern English novels, that he would feel a history of Mr. Stubbs the tallow-chandler, an ineffable relief from the monotonous insipidity of the purple. But, as in all essentials the following narrative is true, nothing being altered but the name of the family in which it occurred, it is necessary to state or admit that the Daubville family consisted of Lady Caroline Daubville, a widow—her two daughters, Margaret and Eliza, then with her—a son John, absent at Oxford—and of Lady Caroline's brother-in-law, also called John, who at the moment our story opens

was driving up the avenue of the Villa Ardinghelli on a visit to his sister and nieces.

The two young ladies ran down-stairs to welcome their uncle. The Honourable John Daubville was tall and spare, somewhat above fifty years of age; very bald, and with a stereotyped sneer upon his lips. A kindly-natured man in reality, he prided himself upon his scorn for all forms of superstition, all prejudice, and upon his profound disbelief of all supernatural interference with the order of nature. He had trained his mind carefully in the school of the French Encyclopedists; and Voltaire, in particular, was his great authority. The universe was a huge machine—the globe a somewhat smaller one—men and women were machines with certain functions and powers; and he—the Honourable John Daubville—was a machine of a superior class. He admitted gravitation, he bowed to centrifugal force; he detested an east wind, and he rejoiced in ortolans. All things above or beyond the experience of every day life he dismissed

summarily as impossible. This was the gentleman who was conducted up-stairs, by the two young ladies, to the presence of Lady Caroline.

"And how are you, my dear sister, in this best of all possible worlds? I am glad to find you in such good quarters, and hope you will be able to find a corner in which your poor brother may repose after the fatigues of the London season last summer, and an autumn in Paris."

"Well, brother, well," replied Lady Caroline, "and I am glad that the villa we have chosen meets with your approbation. Right glad are we to see you: but—but—" Lady Caroline paused with a made-up smile.

"Eh! What do you mean? Is there not a room for me here?"

"Yes, dear brother, there is not only one room, but two rooms. The only objections I know to the first, are four. It is over the stable, dark, small, and looks on the court-yard. The second is a noble chamber, with a glorious view of the Mediterranean; but—but—I say again—"

"But what?"

"There is a report that it is haunted."

"Pooh!" replied Mr. Daubville, with a look of the most ineffable contempt; "no doubt there will be room for both of us. So the ghost does not insist upon sharing my bed I shall make no objection, and indeed if he does—By the way, is it he or she?"

"He, John, he," replied Lady Caroline, with a look worthy of Lucretia at her spinning-wheel.

"Umph? Well, if he does, being a ghost it is no great matter. Only there must be an arrangement between us as to our hours of getting up; for, as I have always understood, ghosts are in the habit of rising at cock-crow. Now, unless you could make away with all the cocks in the neighbourhood save one, and shut that one up in a dark closet till 10 A.M., and then open the door. Eh?"

"Well, well, John," said Lady Caroline, "I see you are as sceptical as ever."

Mr. Daubville made a profound bow.

"And so Margaret and Eliza shall conduct you to the HAUNTED ROOM."

"By all means," replied her brother. "I dare say your ghost and I can get on well together."

The room into which Mr. Daubville was conducted by his nieces, had obviously been used of old as the principal sleeping apartment of the villa. It was very large, and contrary to the received opinions with regard to haunted rooms, was very cheerful and bright. Three large windows looked out upon, or rather towards the sea, for the Villa Ardinghelli stood upon the slope of a hill, distant about three-quarters of a mile from the sandy beach. Through these windows the western sun was now pouring his rays, and illuminating the mysterious chamber. At one end of the room was a huge bed, such a bed as is only found in Italy, with the exception of that one specimen which still exists at Ware in Hertfordshire. The hangings of the bed were of old discoloured tapestry, such as a ghost might reasonably enough expect to find in any apartment devoted to the use of a lodger of his class. The bed was not only enormously broad, but high in proportion, so that it would have required considerable gymnastic

powers to have reached the table land on the summit, but for a flight of steps which stood by its side. Mattress after mattress stuffed with the leaves of the Indian corn had been piled up, the one on the other, in order that the stately pile might attain its due proportions. Over against the bed was a large open chimney—the hearth fitted up with "dogs" of quaint old workmanship. Great blocks of fir, and the pine-cones picked up in the adjacent woods, were the fuel with which it was fed. There was a clumsy but richly-carved dressing-table placed facing the centre window, with a large mirror behind it, and well-nigh opposite this, against the fourth and remaining wall of the room, a black chestnut wardrobe, large enough to hold half-a-dozen people standing upright. Now it must not be supposed that the great bed with its hangings, the toilette-table with its mirror, the open chimney with its dogs, the wardrobe with its capabilities—though these might fairly be considered ghostly furniture—were sufficient to communicate to the apartment the feeling of a haunted room. It was so large that if the articles named did not appear quite lost in it, at any rate they seemed to be the right things in the right place. The care of the young ladies had provided three or four small tables, unquestionably of modern fashion and make, covered over with those little knick-knacks which look so charming, and which are so useless, but without which ladies do not seem to consider that bed-rooms in country-houses can be complete. A few vases of flowers contributed their share of brightness, and unwholesomeness, to the Haunted Room.

"Well, my dear girls," said Mr. Daubville, after a glance round the room, "at any rate, I see nothing very terrible here. Your ghost must be of simple and inoffensive habits; and there is plenty of room, as I am happy to observe, in that portentous bed for us both. No window curtains either; nothing but the open shutters outside—all the better: less cover, Miss Eliza, for young ladies who might be disposed to play tricks at a poor old credulous uncle's expense."

"Tricks! I would not come near the place after sun-down for ten thousand pounds."

"Hum! my dear, large sum—very. But let us have a peep into this wardrobe. There, if anywhere, we shall find the solution of the enigma in case of disturbance. Nothing in there but three racks for clothes: back all sound, and clear of the wall. Not much danger there,—dressing-table without furniture, frills, or fooleries—right again—not like a conjuror's table with all the apparatus underneath. Frame of the bedstead three inches from the ground. Egad, if anybody slips beneath that, he can't be a body—must be a ghost—all the better."

"Oh, uncle!" said Miss Margaret, "it's quite awful to hear you talk so. Who wouldn't exchange a cold, nasty, thin ghost for a good, solid, comfortable human housebreaker, with—perhaps, a flannel waistcoat on."

"Not I, for one, Maggie. Housebreaker might make a ghost of me; ghost couldn't turn me into a housebreaker. Let me have a look up the chimney—cross-bars—all right, again—besides, good fire, smoke him out—make the place too hot

to hold him. Only one point more to guard—excuse my vigilance, but old yeomanry officer,—know what I'm about. Must take care nobody gets in at the window. Old soldier—mustn't be caught napping. Splendid, magnificent indeed."

"Yes, we thought you would enjoy the view."

"It isn't the view, you foolish girl; look at the drop—sixty—ay! I dare say seventy feet sheer down. How's that? we only came up one pair of stairs. I see—house stands on a terrace—carriage drove in back way. Very good, indeed—no danger from without—puzzle them to get up that wall—not a balcony anywhere? No—that's all right. Young ladies, Uncle John will undertake to make good the place against all attacks from ghosts actual, or ghosts that are to be. And now, my dear girls, if you will kindly rejoin your mother, I will make my little preparations for dinner."

The dinner was over—the cloth was drawn, and Mr. Daubville proceeded to give the ladies an abstract of how the fashionable babies in London had been born, how the fashionable couples had been married, and how the fashionable people whose time had come, had passed away beyond the further notice of the *beau monde*. There was, however, throughout the evening, something forced and unnatural in the spirits of the party. The ladies appeared to look upon Uncle John as you would look upon a dear friend who was about to go up in a balloon, or down in a diving-bell, or to lead a forlorn hope, or engage in any other very perilous enterprise, from which there was very little chance that he would return alive. They would put too much sugar in his tea; place stools for his feet when he required none, and smother him with a thousand feminine attentions, which at length became actually oppressive. Uncle John at last started up, saying:—

"My journey to-day has been long and fatiguing. Pray excuse me, dear Caroline, if I take my candle, and retire for the night."

At this moment, one of the window-shutters blew open with a loud crash. Margaret, who was presiding over the tea-table, in her sudden fright seized the handles of the tea-urn for support; the tea-urn gave way, and upset its scalding contents upon the accurately shaved hind-quarters of Lady Caroline's favourite poodle, Benvenuto. The dog immediately retreated under his mistress' chair, with one long despairing yell, like the pitch-pipe in a country church. Eliza threw herself on her knees before her mother, which touching movement of filial confidence was met in a somewhat eccentric manner by that lady, who cuffed her violently, while she lavished upon her at the same time expressions of the most devoted affection. Mr. John Daubville alone retained his presence of mind, calling out:—

"It is only the dog," and began kicking Benvenuto under the chair. Benvenuto, whether aroused by the personal indignity offered to him, or smarting under the stimulus of his recent hot bath, or really under the impression that Mr. Daubville was the cause of the confusion, fastened his teeth on that gentleman's calf till his eyes watered with pain. At last, but not for some time, order was restored, and Mr. Daubville, desirous of regaining the position of a man of cool head and unflinching

nerve, from which he had somewhat fallen, with one vigorous kick disengaged his leg from Benvenuto's teeth, and walking over to the window, soon ascertained that it was only the fastening of the shutter that had given way under the pressure of a sudden gust of wind.

"No, John," said Lady Caroline. "It is not the wind, it is a warning! The Spirit of the Haunted Chamber is abroad, and bids you not to intrude upon the apartment sacred to his repose."

"My dear sister," said Mr. Daubville, "nonsense; in that room I will sleep to-night, though fifty thousand ghosts should be my bed-fellows."

So saying, Mr. Daubville took up his candle and retired. His retreat would have been dignified, but that Benvenuto, who did not at all seem to consider the dispute had ended in a manner satisfactory to his own feelings, kept on making short rushes at him, thus compelling him to face about, and contest every inch of ground to the door.

There was a fine wood fire smouldering on the hearth of the Haunted Chamber, as Uncle John entered it to take up his quarters for the night. The great log had long since accomplished all that it could in the way of crackling, and blazing, and sending forth tongues of fire; and had now concentrated its efforts upon the production of a steady, rich glow. The room looked red, save at the extremity where the great bed stood; this portion of the room was so distant from the hearth, that it did not take the colour from the fire; but was so dark that you could scarcely distinguish the objects it contained. The huge bed looked indeed like a heavy shadow. It was very odd, but somehow or another Uncle John began to feel uncomfortable. The candle scarcely produced any appreciable effect either upon the red glow or the gloom.

"Ghosts," he muttered to himself. "Pooh! pooh! not to be caught that way. I wish that confounded dog had been a ghost. However, it's as well to guard against what they call fun—so I will load one of my pistols with powder in order to frighten any one who might be disposed to play a trick at the old gentleman's expense, and another with powder and ball in case an intruder of a different description should drop in." So said, and so done. "And now," continued Uncle John, "I will put one at the right hand of the bed—that shall be the business pistol—and one at the left, for the benefit of practical jokers. Now for it—rather dark down there—well, well, what an old fool I am—ha, ha, ha! place the pistols out of my reach at once indeed—not such a simpleton as that—but I'll take one—the one loaded with powder and ball—yes, powder *and* ball, and reconnoitre my quarters." Pronouncing these last words very emphatically, Uncle John struck up with great vigour, but considerably out of tune, the old poacher's anthem.

It's my delight of a shiny night in the season of the year,

and marched up to the old wardrobe with his pistol cocked in one hand, and the lighted candle in the other. The wardrobe was as empty as when he had inspected it. The bed with its

heavy tapestry hangings was visited in the same manner.

"Mere matter of form," remarked Uncle John, "but old officer—must go my rounds—all habit."

Obviously more comfortable in his mind, he now proceeded to make his preparations for the night; but the only point in these on which any stress need be laid, was the care which Mr. Daubville displayed in putting on a heavy cotton night-cap; one of the good old sort, which stood upright on the head, and was crowned at its apex with a tassel. For further security, and perhaps not altogether without a lingering sentiment of the beautiful, Uncle John proceeded to bind round his head a pink ribbon.

"Had the hint from the old Vicomte de Pituite. Combination of utility and elegance. Ah! wish I'd turned gray instead of bald. There are so many dyes of approved merit; but here I am as bare as a billiard-ball. Oh! for the sensation of brushing one's hair! Those young dogs, they don't know the blessings they enjoy. One hour now of being small-tooth-combed by a rough-handed nurse-maid, with one's thick elfin locks matted and tangled. Talk of the first kiss of first love—nothing to—

That pleasing agony which schoolboys bear
When nursemaids small-tooth-comb their shaggy hair.

Not so bad, that, and now to bed."

With some little trouble Mr. Daubville succeeded in performing the feat of ascending his lofty couch, but the weight of his body on the many mattresses, stuffed as they were with the crackling leaves of the Indian corn, produced such an appalling noise, that he sat upright for some moments with a pistol in each hand, and a look of firm defiance in his face, waiting for the attack, which never came. Understanding at length the real meaning of all this disturbance, he recovered from his alarm, and carefully depositing his pistols within reach of his hands, but beyond the region marked out in his own mind as sufficient for tossing and turning about in his sleep, and placing the candlestick with a box of matches in the tray just at the edge of the bed, Uncle John blew out the light, and in a quarter of an hour was asleep.

Three or four hours passed away—nothing had occurred to arouse him to consciousness, but somehow or other he fell a dreaming. He was hunting walrus; he was in search of the Magnetic Pole—capital sport, and majestic pursuit—but it was all so cold—so very cold. Then a change came over his dream,—he was with Dante and his Mantuan guide slowly pacing the circles where the condemned spirits expiated their misdeeds in various forms of suffering. Then he himself was a wicked pope of the opposite line of politics to that of the strong party-man whose election-squibs were framed for eternity. He was condemned to lie for ever on a bed of molten lava, with his head in a huge block of ice. Strange to say the torture was bearable, although decidedly uncomfortable. "What shall I do for pocket-handkerchiefs," thought Uncle John, "if this goes on? I shall never be able to get at my nose." With one appalling sneeze he awoke; it

was pitch dark, and he continued sneezing. His first act was to put his hands up to his head—his night-cap was gone!

"Eh! what is this? night-cap tumbled off, despite the ribbon—never knew that happen before. Where can it be? must strike a light and see."

This was done; the sleeper was fairly awakened; he groped everywhere—behind the pillows—under the bedclothes; he craned over the sides of the bed—got up and searched everywhere. The night-cap was not to be found. It was very odd—he must have put it on before getting into bed; he had been bald since five-and-twenty, and whatever other duty he had neglected, he had never forgotten to put on a night-cap during all these years. What made matters worse just now was that the trunk containing his provision of night-caps, had not yet been brought up into his room. There was no help for it, but to make shift by tying a stocking round his head, and so to sleep again. He was aroused by a knocking at his door; a servant entered the room with hot water. It was broad daylight, and time to get up. The friendly stocking which he had tied round his head had fallen off in the night, but was lying on the pillow, and Uncle John had a most fearful cold in his head. *The night-cap was not to be found!*

When he got down to the breakfast-room he found Lady Caroline and her daughters waiting to welcome him with looks of fearful interest. Everybody save Benvenuto, *tantene animis celestibus*, mindful of the feud of the preceding evening, appeared delighted to see him safe and sound.

"Did the Spirit of the Chamber pass before you in the night, dear John?" said Lady Caroline. "You look worn and wan."

"Ah-tschoo! ah-tschoo! ah-tschoo!"

"Oh! dear Uncle, tell us all about it—have you seen the ghost?"

"Ah-tschoo! Confound the ghost! Oh! dear! ah-tschoo."

"Dear John, it appears to me that you are suffering from catarrh; but at least you have escaped the dangers of the supernatural world."

Mr. Daubville, with watery eyes, and many sneezes, related to them his adventure of the previous night; it was the strangest—the most unaccountable thing. He quite lost his temper when he found that he was unable to convince his sister and nieces that he had put on a night-cap at all; but was somewhat soothed when Margaret and Eliza, who were aware of his partiality for night-caps, told him that for months past they had been engaged in working for him a night-cap, which would be to other night-caps as Milan Cathedral to other cathedrals. The presentation night-cap wanted but the tassel, which the young ladies were to procure that afternoon in Leghorn, and it would be ready next day.

"Well, my dear nieces—ah-tschoo—I am much obliged to you for your magnificent present, and still more for your—ah-tschoo—consideration for my comfort. This night I suppose I must put up with—ah-tschoo—one of the ordinary material; but at least to-night I shall be able—ah-tschoo!—to recover from this wretched but temporary ailment, and be in a fit condition to do justice to your—ah-tschoo—gift."

The day passed away—the night came. Uncle John retired, and the next morning presented himself again at breakfast, in a paroxysm of sneezes, and this time in a most unmistakeable passion.

“Caroline, I don’t—ah-tschoo—understand this abominable practical joking. It’s too bad. I shall—ah-tschoo—suffer from neuralgia during the remainder of my—ah-tschoo—days!”

“Why, dear John, what is the matter?”

“The matter—ah-tschoo! *The night-cap is gone again! Ah-tschoo! tschoo! tschoo!*”

In order that this recital may be disencumbered from the history of Uncle John’s sneezes, it will be sufficient to say that he related, with much indignation, how he had taken the precaution on the previous night to summon one of the servants to his presence whilst he was preparing for bed. This servant—Pietro—known in the establishment as Pietro Grande, an old man, above all suspicion of participation in any practical joke, had seen the night-cap on Mr. Daubville’s head, when he got into bed—had extinguished his light—had left him in bed with the night-cap on; but morning came, and where was the night-cap? Uncle John would not believe but that somebody had entered his room in the night and stripped his sleeping head of its honours; indeed it was easy to gather from his manner that he believed his nieces to be at the bottom of the mischief. Certainly he had not locked his door. He could not suppose that any person in the house, certainly not any person who set any value on his health or comfort, would be so inconsiderate—so wanting in respect to him—so silly, as to take part in such a miserable trick. However, he must pay the penalty, but if he could but catch them—! There was a savage twinkle about Uncle John’s eye as he sneezed out these last words which seemed to imply that even the stately Lady Caroline herself would fare but ill if he found her meddling with his night-cap: and there was a pistol, as our Irish friends would say, “convenient.”

The young ladies seemed to be perfectly aware that they were suffering under the suspicions of their uncle; but either they were consummate actresses, or they were entirely innocent of the trick which, as he supposed, had been played upon him. In the course of the afternoon the cold in the head got better—colds in the head do harden up in the middle of the day—and Margaret and Eliza brought to their uncle the presentation night-cap.

It was a magnificent article made of black velvet, heavily embroidered with gold. It was padded inside, and the ingenuity of the young ladies had even contrived a moveable strap to pass under the chin, fastening with a button at either side, and which might be either used or taken off at pleasure.

“I will button it on with the strap at night, dear girls,” said Uncle John, “and it would have been well if, on this gorgeous cap, had been inscribed the motto which goes with the iron crown of Lombardy, ‘*Guai a chi me tocca!*’ I think it will puzzle my friends of the two last nights to get this off my head.”

It was not a little remarkable that all recollection

of the haunted room seemed to have passed away from the minds of all. There was something so homely and prosaic—so grotesque, so earthy of the earth, in all this discussion about night-caps lost, and to be lost, that a ghost with any kind of self-respect could not even have attempted to hold up his head in society where such subjects formed the staple of discussion.

It may be mentioned then that, on the third night of his stay at the Villa Ardinghelli, Uncle John actually put his feet in hot water, greased his nose, and partook of a copious basin of gruel in the haunted room. In the course of the day a blacksmith had been summoned from Leghorn who had fitted a heavy night-catch on to the door, and had led a wire round to the bed-head. A bell-rope dangled from this, by help of which Uncle John without moving from his snug place, in the bed, could either shut himself up in his castle or admit visitors at pleasure. He let fall the bolt, saw that his pistols were ready, as usual, to his hand (this time both were loaded with ball), and then determined to remain awake. This resolution he acted upon for some time, soothed with the warmth and pleased with the rich red light. Gradually all sounds in the house died away. Uncle John tried the repeater under his pillow; it marked half-past eleven; he fell a-musing upon wigs! should he now without any thought of imposing upon his fellow-creatures, but simply with a view to his own comfort, seriously entertain the idea of a wig—not of young hair, but of a colour appropriate to his time of life—regarding it merely as a—a—a permanent—cap? Uncle John fell asleep.

He knew not how long he had slept; but the same sensation of coldness as on the previous nights pervaded his sleeping frame, and settled finally in his head. He awoke—clasped his head: Powers above! could it be? *The velvet night-cap was gone!*

This time the night was not so far spent as it had been before when he had been roused from his slumbers by the abstraction of his caps. The fire was still burning, though now low, upon the hearth (a lurid red glow pervaded the room), but still there was an unnatural feeling abroad. Uncle John wanted to catch at his pistols; but his arms were glued to his sides, and his poor bald head grew wet with perspiration. When he moved, never so lightly, the crackling of the Indian corn-leaves underneath him was to him like the crack of doom. At last he could stand it no longer; he tried to shriek out “Who’s there?” at the top of his voice, as he would have cheered at the cover side in his younger days—his words came from him in a weak, childish treble. There was no reply. He sate up in bed, and the first object on which his eye rested, was a tall figure in what was apparently a white cloak, standing before the mirror with his black velvet cap on his head.

This sight immediately roused Uncle John’s indignation. He caught up his pistols, and, in bed as he was, called out:—

“I’ve got you at last; bring back my cap, this moment—this very moment.”

The white figure took no notice of the summons, but remained before the mirror, making the most fantastic bows and salutations to itself. You would

almost have supposed it to be a dancing-master, practising a new minuet. Its attention, however, seemed to be chiefly devoted to the cap. Now it cocked it upon one side of its head, and stuck a hand upon its own side in a jaunty way; now it drew the cap well-nigh over its eyes with both its hands, and bowed its head backwards and forwards, like a Chinese Mandarin figure: then it thrust it well off the forehead in Pierrot fashion; but all this time Uncle John could never catch a glimpse of the face. Roused at length to an unbearable pitch of exasperation as the white figure seemed to evince symptoms of an intention to pull the tassel off—

"Now, take notice," roared out Uncle John; "this pistol is loaded with ball, and I'm a nine-of-diamonds man, in solemn earnest. If you don't bring that cap to this side of the bed, and surrender before I count three, I fire. One—two—three."

The pistol exploded, but the draped figure treated the commencement of hostilities with the profoundest contempt, not to say derision. The only effect of the discharge was that it began turning its head round and round with great rapidity, like a dancing dervish in a paroxysm. The idea immediately occurred to Mr. Daubville, that the bullets had been drawn from his pistols; but, even so, it was strange that the figure would not turn round; and took no more notice of his existence than though he had been in his bachelor lodgings, in Norfolk Street, May Fair. He slipped out of bed with the other pistol in his hand, and stepped across to where the figure stood, still with its face to the mirror, determined to ascertain who the bold intruder might be. The gyrations of the head had ceased when Uncle John approached near enough to see over the shoulder of the figure into the mirror. As he caught the reflection, he saw that the velvet cap was upon a skull; that when the figure partly opened its drapery, it was a skeleton; and the drapery itself a shroud! In the midst of his agony of terror, he noticed particularly that two of the front teeth of the skull were deficient. Uncle John fired off his second pistol, the flash passed through the figure, lighting up the ribs, and the bullet shattered the mirror. The figure turned round, and appeared to take off the cap, and made a profound salutation to Uncle John, who sank insensible on the floor.

There was a noise in the passage outside; a calling from many voices; and amongst them the voices of Lady Caroline and her daughters were predominant. The door was broken open by the servants, and Uncle John was carried off to another apartment, and gradually brought back to consciousness. He seemed at first to have forgotten all about his adventures of the night; it was only when the circumstance of his having been found insensible on the floor of the Haunted Room was recalled to his memory, that he called out:

"The ghost—the ghost! Take me away from this accursed place. Take me away at once."

The next morning, the Daubville family left the Villa Ardinghelli, and exchanged the neighbourhood of Leghorn for Florence. Uncle John could never be brought to speak of his adventures that terrible night in the Haunted Room.

* * * *

One day, in the following spring, the Daubville family, Uncle John and all, were roaming about Florence, under the guidance of a learned Italian friend, who had taken upon himself to be their Cicerone round the antiquities of Florence. In the course of one of their wanderings, in a somewhat remote quarter of the town, they came to the church of San Teodoro; a church little visited by English travellers. There were two or three carriages in the piazza before the church.

"Ah! I remember," said their conductor. "How fortunate we came here to-day. A tomb is to be opened, the tomb of a great hero in our Florentine history. Come along!"

Their guide hurried them into the church. As they were walking up the aisle, Lady Caroline whispered: "But whose tomb is it?"

Their conductor paused, waited till the whole party had joined up, and then, in that emphatic whisper peculiar to Italians, said:

"The tomb of AMBROGIO DEI ARDINGHELLI!"

Uncle John followed the Abbé to the spot, when just as they came up the workmen had succeeded in heaving the marble lid off a sarcophagus. The lid was so ponderous that it had been necessary to use strong mechanical contrivances to move it. The by-standers crowded up; but only a few were allowed to approach at a time, and amongst these the place of honour was given to the English ladies. Margaret had no sooner looked in, than she shrieked out:—

"Uncle John's night-cap!"

Uncle John himself pressed his way through the little crowd of spectators, clutched the side of the tomb with frantic grasp, and looked in. There lay the skeleton of Ambrogio with Mr. Daubville's velvet night-cap on the grinningskull; his two cotton night-caps were by the side of the skeleton, somewhat dusty. In the tomb there were about a dozen other night-caps of various ages and fashions. Two front teeth were wanting in the skull.

Uncle John quitted the church with his party, and that evening related his story to his relations and their Italian friend. This gentleman had brought with him an extract from an old Florentine chronicler, which, as he said, would throw light upon the matter. Here it is:

"Now the skirmish having passed pleasantly, with great delectation to the noble knights and their horses, and the ground being fairly bestrewn with the bodies of the valiant combatants, 'Where is Ambrogio?' was the affectionate cry of his people, as they gallantly retreated at their utmost speed. At that moment Messer Ambrogio was lying on his back, unable to move from the weight of his armour, and his old enemy, Messer Buoncore dei Straccini, was kneeling on his chest—he was a heavy and worshipful lord—and tugging away at his helmet, into which he had been unable to introduce his dagger to finish the good lord's existence, according to the merciful custom of knighthood, so cunning was the handicraft of the Spanish smith. At last the fastenings gave way, and Messer Buoncore saw with whom he had to do. 'Quarter and ransom,' cried Messer Ambrogio. Messer Buoncore swung the helmet round with his utmost strength, and with it struck Messer Ambrogio on the mouth, whereby two of his front teeth were smitten out, saying, 'Ha, such quarter as thou didst show to the people of Sienna, such quarter will they show to thee.' With that he caused Messer

Ambrogio (somewhat confused in his mind by the blow he had received) to be conveyed into Sienna in a cart, and there he was beheaded. Before his death, he had entreated that his helmet might be restored to him, but this, his last request, was cruelly denied him. A few days afterwards there was a truce between the people of Sienna and the people of Florence, and the body of Messer Ambrogio, in full armour save the helmet, was restored to the Florentines. It was buried with great pomp in San Teodoro."

The Italian told him that it was a recognised tradition in Tuscany, that the spirit of Ambrogio haunted that old Livornese villa: that the departed warrior was ever in search of some substitute for his lost helmet; and that, in his opinion, it had undoubtedly appeared to him. Uncle John did not mention his own conclusions; but from that time he was an altered man, and gave up Voltaire.

K.

RECOLLECTIONS OF OXFORD.

A DAY WITH THE CHRISTCHURCH DRAG. CHAPTER I.



ALTHOUGH I dearly loved my uncle, the Prebendary, and honour his memory with a true respect, I am thankful that he only paid me one brief visit—on the occasion of his taking his doctor's degree—during my pleasant years at Oxford. My uncle was just a thought too fond of Greek to be really good company for us undergraduates, and he had an uncomfortable habit of alluding to the class list, which to hunting men was almost offensive. I blushed when he asked Phil Hunter, of Oriel, who had just performed the unprecedented feat of winning the Aylesbury Steeple Chase, and being plucked for his Little Go the same week, what he thought of Peile's "Agamemnon?" Nor did Philip at all alleviate my distress by inquiring, in reply, whether "Agamemnon was one of the colonel's* young 'uns?" and whether my uncle knew "what he was by?"

Furthermore, the announcement of his coming caused me great expense and inconvenience in re-arranging my apartments. My favourite terriers must be driven from their snug retreat in "the

study," to the uncertain diet and coarse society of some dog-merchant's yard. Highly-coloured delineations of "the cracks of the day," and "the pets" of the evening, both performing miracles of saltation, must be taken down and concealed. The roulette table; the travelling cigar-chest, oak, bound with brass,—*robur et æs triplex*,—and "just holding a fortnight's supply, sir, between three and four pounds;" the musical box—it has never recovered its original tone since that wild O'Brien would give it some preserved ginger for playing "Ah, non giunge" so "awfully jolly;"—the well-peppered target for puff-and-dart; the battledores and shuttlecocks; the devils-on-two-sticks: even the cornopean, which everybody loved, except, perhaps, the mathematical tutor,—(on one occasion he so far forgot himself as to rush out of his room, and inquire from the landing, "What lunatic was ill-treating that wretched horn?"—but there never was a mathematician yet with a soul); all these must be removed, and in their place must be set out the obsolescent reading desk, and dusty dictionaries, the solemn paraphernalia of a "sap."

* Colonel, now General Peel.

But, in spite of all my forethought and preparations, I came to signal grief. One morning we were sitting at breakfast (such a breakfast! no grills, no tankards, no top-boots on the hearth-rug), my uncle was deploring the decease of some German commentator, whose name I had not previously heard, and I was lamenting the much more palpable loss of my matutinal bit o' baccy, when there came an ominous single knock at the door; and as, in accordance with my invitation, that door opened, I shuddered to acknowledge the presence of one whom of all men else I should least have wished my uncle to meet—I knew that my visitor was Billy Bouquet.

Ah, me! that door, I say, no sooner moved upon its hinges, than there entered the apartment, and the nostrils of my kinsman simultaneously, a most definite stink of aniseed, accompanied by various attendant smells, which gradually asserted their own identity, and represented with a cruel faithfulness the dogs, and the ferrets, and the rats, and the vermin generally, from whom they freshly came. “‘I am not the rose,’ said the perfumed earth in the Persian fable, ‘but cherish me, for we have dwelt together.’” Billy might have said as much of his badger. And I shall never forget my uncle’s face, as he sat with his head erect, like the stag ere he left Glenartney, and snuffed the tainted gale.

Billy Bouquet, or, as he was called by undergraduates who were shy of French, Sweet William, somewhat resembled in personal symmetry Mr. Robson’s “Boots at the Swan.” His head, which gave one the painful idea of having been sadly overgrazed by his rats, was screened from the inclemencies of our fickle climate, and made symmetrical at the same time of his avocations and attachments, by a memorial cap from the epidermis of a deceased bull-dog, of whom he was wont to remark, in all seriousness, that “he’d always know’d that his dog Beerhouse” (archæologists assure me that his original name was Cerberus) “was a sight too good for this world.” His neckerchief had once been scarlet—a præ-Raphaelite, vivid scarlet—but time and perspiration had done their silent work, and it was now a peaceful brick colour. His coat and vest of velveteen (the bronze buttons chastely relieved with foxes’ heads in the last stage of inflammation) were noticeable for their vast infinity of pockets, one of which, inside the coat, I verily believe would have held a calf. The rest of his person was clad in kingly cord; and of his legs I have only to say, that he was the very last person whom you would have selected to stop a pig in a gate, for the obvious reason that the animal in question would most undoubtedly have run between them.

Once upon a time, some good young men had originated a most benevolent scheme for deodorising Billy Bouquet; and he was actually induced to have a bath on account, and to attire himself in a change of raiment. But “that day there was dole in Astolat;” and he came next morning in his old clothes to the chief promoter of the plan, tendering the vestments which he could not wear, in a bundle to that cock-philanthropist, and declaring, almost in tears, that “the

boys howled at him, and that” (here the speaker was visibly affected) “*the badger did not know him!*” And our sole resource and remedy from that time, whenever we required an interview, was to fill his short pipe with the strongest tobacco at hand, and to place him at the furthest possible distance at which conversation was practicable.

But he sees now, as he stands under my lintel, with a knuckle lifted up to his right eye-brow (his idea of ordering himself lowly and reverently to all his betters), that this is no time for a colloquy, and after one short sentence he is gone:

“Tu, to-morrow, if you please, sir, Betts’s Bottoms.”

I murmured something about “College rat-catcher,” and expressed a conviction that “the fellow was drunk;” but it was quite evident that my uncle, figuratively as well as literally, “smelt a rat;” and he told me subsequently, when I had left Oxford, and he no longer felt it a duty to play the Don for my improvement, that he had never experienced greater difficulty in maintaining a dignified deportment.

CHAPTER II.

My uncle left the University next morning in a new shovel hat and gaiters (the avuncular legs were particularly neat, and my aunt had always yearned in spirit for that day when the world might see them); and punctually at “tu” of the clock I arrived at Betts’s Bottoms. Betts was a jovial, generous farmer, who lived some three miles out of Oxford, and who not only allowed us every now and then to have “a lark” over his fences, but gave us the best of good ale afterwards from a silver tankard, which he valued dearly, the gift of sporting undergraduates. The Bottoms were some low pastures at the outskirts of his farm, and were the rendezvous on this occasion for the followers of the Christ Church “Drag.” M. Bouquet, trailing the usual rabbit, well-steeped in aniseed, though he scarcely required any additional perfumery to secure the attentions of the pack, had been despatched over the stiffest country to be found; and the hard-riding Oxonians were gathering fast for the fun. In velvet hunting caps, short loose coats, designed for the Drag expressly by Mr. Bennett, blameless inexpressibles, and lustrous tops, they come into the field upon every species of the comprehensive genus horse, from my lord’s two hundred guinea hunter, superb and glorious in his silky sheen, to the sorry screw, the discarded of some racing stud, who was out yesterday with the Heythrop, and is engaged to-morrow for Drake’s. But every rider is as confident and cheery as though he were mounted upon Old Lottery; and there is laughter, honest and hearty, albeit the words which move it may be boisterous rather than brilliant. *Exempli gratia*:

“Percy, receive my sincere congratulations on having accomplished the ascent of that fine giraffe. Did you begin to mount him yesterday, or the day before? You’ll come down, I suppose, by parachute; though I really think, if you could get him to kneel, that you might alight on the leads of the college. Just look over that wood in

the direction of Oxford, and tell us the time by St. Mary's clock."

"Frank, how can you, with your love of translations, look so happy and at ease on that destroyer of 'cribs?'" Q. E. D.

And even if our proposition be not proven, there must be silence now. The master of the Drag has collected according to custom a purse from the non-subscribers, and the hounds are brought into the field. Inspect them now, if you wish to do so, for you will see them no more to-day in anything like proximity. Fastidious indeed must that man be who cannot here find something to his taste, for no two of the five couple are at all alike. Here you have none of that monotonous uniformity which makes it so difficult to distinguish ordinary foxhounds, but every member of the pack, from that huge mastiff-like hound, which they sent us from the Old Berkshire, to that light little harrier from Bradley Farm, has a distinct individuality and character. But why dwell upon mere appearances? Two or three of them can go like the wind, and the others add materially to the excitement by making a good deal of noise, especially when they are ridden over, a not unfrequent catastrophe. The former will run out the Drag, and be taken home in triumph; the latter will find their way, sometime before midnight, to M. Bouquet's château in the Slums, half-drowned, and maimed, and weary.

They hit the scent now, and stream away at speed. The first few fences are easy enough to-day, and all get over nearly in line. Now there is a formidable post and rail, which says plainly *noli me tangere*, and some of our party slacken their pace. Hark! there is a crashing sound, as though twenty wickets went down at once to the fast bowling of Jackson, and a couple of steeds gallop onwards riderless. Gentlemen in the rear press gratefully to the welcome fissures, and on goes the Drag.

On, swiftly over the springing turf, and steadily through the heavy plough, never swerving at wood or water, bullfinch or stile, stone-wall or stake-and-bound; on goes the Drag. An agriculturist invites us pressingly to stop, and to discuss our right to "ride over folks' land like Beelzebubs;" some labourers salute us with a harmless discharge of turnips; but on goes the Drag. On, but how changed! Steeds came down at that horrid double, where the bank was burrowed like a sponge; three, pumped in that humid fallow, dropped short in the drain which bounded it; and from other sorrowful causes only seven out of a field of twenty (two miles gone over) are with the hounds.

And now "we few, we happy few" (for though it may not be sport, and must not be called so, it is certainly glorious fun!) rushing at full speed through a high, black-looking fence, which holds the lighter ones for a while as it were weighing them, come into a large open pasture of level and elastic sward. It need be even and elastic, for half-way across is THE BROOK, deep and dangerous, with something like eight yards of water. My horse sees it now, and cheers my fluttering heart with a strong attempt to quicken his paces, as though he longed to be over. But I

keep him well together at a moderate gallop, till we come within some five-and-twenty yards of those broad waters, so dark and cold, and then, rushing at his leap in all his strength and speed, he is over, and I am patting my brave, dear horse, in an ecstasy of gratified pride!

Looking back upon the chase, I see Percy coming next on Giraffe, in very workmanlike form; but the big brute loses heart at the last moment, desires to refuse but cannot, and, jumping short, lands his rider on the bank, and then slips back into the stream. Percy kept his hold of the reins; and I shall not readily forget the face of his quadruped, raised to the firmament as though in earnest supplication, while he tugged away with one hand, and applied his hunting-whip with the other—in vain. This unhappy precedent was fatal. The crib-biter stopped with a startling suddenness, and poor Frank looked as if he was playing at leap-frog as he bounded off into the stream, a regular case of "stand and deliver;" the rest either got in or refused; and, for the first and only time in my life, I had an undisputed monopoly of the Christ Church Drag!

On I went exulting, and without stop or stay, until, after jumping a hedge and ditch into a lane, we—my pack of four and I—came suddenly to a check. Concluding that, of course, the Drag was onwards, as Sweet William had very severe injunctions to avoid all highways and byways, I was about to charge the opposite fence with a view to casting forward, when the hounds took up the scent down the lane, and were off again at full speed. I could not understand it, but I was bound to follow. Presently we came to a neat white gate, then, to my increasing surprise, into a park-like enclosure; galloping across it to a gravelled road, which led us through plantations and shrubberies; until turning suddenly, and going at full swing, we found ourselves all at once within the portals of a stable-yard!

CHAPTER III.

"BOLT the yard doors, Crupper, and lock up the coach-house," were the first words which I heard on entrance, and these roared with such amazing volume, that my horse positively shied at them.

"*Væ Victis!*" In a corner of that coach-house stood, if anything so limp and drooping could be said to stand, poor little Billy Bouquet,—a piteous contrast to his happy hounds, who, in their guileless ignorance of evil, were leaping joyfully upon him, and could not understand his grief! Solemnly and slowly, the huge folding-doors were closed by two keepers upon the unhappy captive; and Mr. Crupper, the groom, having previously cut off my retreat, locked them, and put the key in his pocket.

Then I turned in the direction whence the word of command had issued, and boldly fronted the foe. He was a handsome, military man, six feet, and sixty; and I ought to have been frightened, I know I ought. But when a young fellow of twenty has been successfully showing to the University of Oxford the way over a big brook, he is very apt to be flushed and thoughtless, and to have a strong distaste for that humble pie,

which his own imprudence has made and baked for him. Accordingly, I regret to say, I lost no time in inquiring, "What the (two of cards) he meant by such ungentlemanlike behaviour?"

Ate and Alecto, what a rage he was in!

"Hear him, hear him!" he exclaimed, turning to his servants, (I remember that the under-keeper touched his hat assentingly, and was sneered at for so doing by Mr. Crupper): "don't lose a word from this fine young gentleman, who has kindly ridden all the way from Oxford to teach us how to behave. I trust, sir, that you have brought your Catechism with you, and that you will edify us with a dissertation on our 'Duty towards our Neighbour.' 'What do I mean, sir?' By the Lord Harry," (he made frequent reference to this nobleman, who was, I suppose, an influential friend), "what do you mean by sending your stinking friends across my estates, sir, and galloping over my wheat, sir, with those mangy cures? Won't you take a canter with that," (he tried hard, but could find no fault with my steed), "with that borrowed beast of yours, into the gardens, and have a turn in the conservatory? By the (usual nobleman), I'll write to the Dons, sir, I will, and have you disgraced. And as for your delightful playmate in the coach-house, sir, I'll have him fumigated with cayenne and brimstone, sir, and when he's sweet enough, he goes to jail. There is my card, sir; I want yours."

"Sir," I replied, meekly, for I apprehended mischief, "I am extremely sorry that the Drag should have been brought over your property, and I am quite sure that Lord Augustus Plantagenet" (I brought out the title with much dignity of intonation, anticipating a great impression), "who is the manager of it, will offer any apology or reparation in his power. His lordship, I am confident, will lose no time in calling upon you. Meanwhile, I trust, sir," giving him my card, "you will overlook my intrusion, and pardon my words. I am not in very good odour with the College authorities—"

"Good odour, sir!" he replied. "I should as soon expect a foumart to be in good odour, as a man who mixed himself up with this—this putrid amusement. And you may tell Master Gussy from me, sir," (that was a finisher, that Master Gussy), "that if he don't mind, I'll write to the Duke, sir, from whose house I have just returned, and have him whipped when he goes home for the holidays, and rests awhile from his refined and arduous studies. You shall hear from me shortly, sir. I wish you good morning. Crupper, give me the key of the coach-house, and open the yard doors."

He was gone, "iracundus, inexorabilis, acer;" and there was nothing for it but to return to Oxford, and convoke my friends in council. So forth I rode, pensively and slowly, musing on the mutabilities of life, and upon the consoling influence of Mr. Hudson's weeds.

I had not achieved a mile of the homeward route, when I heard a clattering of hoofs behind, and a voice calling me to stop.

"The General's compliments," says Mr. Crupper, cantering up on a pony, "and will be glad to see you, sir, if you please, immediate."

Come, thought I, this sounds cheerier by several octaves; and back I went, hopeful, but wondering.

You will readily imagine how my surprise culminated and my spirits rose, when the General, coming to me through those most awful doors, seized me by the hand, and, looking me earnestly in the face, vociferated,

"By the Lord Harry, sir, how's your father? Get off, get off, and take care of the horse, Crupper. Your father, sir, is one of my oldest and dearest friends, though I have not seen him since I came from India. If I had known you were his son, as I know it from this card," (it had my country address upon it), "by (the usual nobleman) you might have jumped in at the drawing-room windows, sir, and run that odoriferous rascal to ground in the best bed!"

How I relished his "rent-day" ale! too strong for any human beings, save the undergraduate and the British yeoman. How many happy hours did I afterwards pass at his pleasant home, in the good old times, when men kept their port! How many scores of pheasants have I bagged in his broad woods!

But Billy Bouquet could never forgive himself for being "caught and trapped like a stoat," (very like a stoat, the General would have said); and the subsequent behaviour of the under-keeper seemed to trouble him even more than the capture. "I ain't partickler proud," he would say, "but when I see that blackguard with the black whiskers a taking on hisself a horfice of which he know'd nothing, and a trailing of the Drag down that 'ere lane to deceive them innocent dogs, I could 'a punched his 'ed with the biggest o' pleasure, and I should 'a punched it, if t'other elephant hadn't been so inconvenient handy." H.

and this turned me against Brussels. They would not have been glad to see me, nor I them.

And so I chose Paris, apparently not a good choice for a man bent on economy; but I heard that Paris was like London in one respect—a man could live as he liked in either place, and have no question asked as to the how and the where. Let a bachelor keep out of the Rue St. Honoré, and mount five pair of stairs instead of two, and he may live in Paris as cheap as he chooses. At any rate, I would try Paris, and if it was too expensive, I could always retreat, shut myself up in Dieppe, or some other place on the coast, and stand a siege as long as the supplies lasted.

So one morning I packed up my things, and was in Paris the same evening. I was driven to an hotel recommended to me by an Englishman during the passage in the steamer; but as the worst room in the house was three francs and a half a day, without attendance, I started off the following morning in search of a lodging more suited to my finances. I had the choice of either living in a room in an hotel, which in France—and I am speaking more particularly of hotels for the French,—is nothing more than a large lodging-house, with the privilege of dining in the house or not; or I might take an *apartement*, which is a suite of rooms with a kitchen, furnished and let by the week or month, or unfurnished and let by the term. This was rather more than required; and besides, the next term being in January, I could not enter at once as I wished. After trailing through half Paris on foot, wheels being out of the question, it was evident that I should be driven to an hotel at last. And even here it was difficult to find anything suiting at once my needs and my means: most of the rooms that fitted the latter were wretched dens at the top of the house; some were quite among the tiles, and, though airy, were far from clean. On the same landing with, and next door to not a few, there were odd-looking women, with large ragged families. Up to this time I had laboured under the impression that a Frenchwoman managed not to have more than three children, but this is a mistake *au cinquième*. At the end of a week I was still in the room at three francs and a half a day, and on the point of commencing a retreat to the coast, when in one of my expeditions in search of a home, I entered into conversation with a gentlemanly-looking person in a cocked hat, long blue cloak, and sword. The lady who became my landlady said that it was *le bon Dieu* that sent me to her hotel; but I found out shortly afterwards that the gentlemanly-looking person was a policeman. He informed me that there was an excellent hotel in the Rue des Mathurins, kept by a friend of his who had been three years in England, and who spoke English; and at that hotel I should find every comfort. "The English spoken" was not a great recommendation, though the comfort of hearing one's language spoken in foreign lands may not actually appear in the bill, it always puts forty per cent. on every other item.

However, I went to the address, and found the Hôtel d'Ici Bas a respectable-looking house. The landlord spoke English, certainly, but broken into very little pieces, and Madame was a well-dressed

LIFE IN A FRENCH KITCHEN. BY C.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT this time last year, I had several reasons for spending a winter abroad, not the least of which was economy.

The question was, "Where shall I eat husks?"

The answer was, some cheerful place where there was something to be seen, and where amusement, and perhaps everything beyond bed, board, and washing, might be had for nothing. This was required by my finances—and so I chose Paris.

I had turned over in my mind all the English haunts on the Continent, but none of them were very attractive to my John Bull ideas; for, though I had travelled a good deal as a soldier, I had not as yet set foot on the Continent. Some of the haunts were too far off. In some there was nothing whatever to do; in others nothing whatever to see; and in not a few neither the one nor the other—two great drawbacks for an idler. It is very tantalising to have to look on at the best of games; but a man must look on when he cannot afford to play. This was my fate.

Brussels would have attracted me, for, by all accounts, it is a nice clean town, not very expensive, and the brave Belgians are not more *un-English* than the usual run of foreigners. But there were at that time two or three very agreeable English families of my acquaintance residing in the place,

woman of thirty-eight, of great ambition, and the most elegant manners.

The house itself had good pretensions—but there was a cooper on one side, and a chaudronnier on the other, who kept down the prices in the Hôtel d'Ici Bas.

"They will not be heard *au quatrième*,"—and up I went. I made an agreement at once for a room at forty-five francs a month, including attendance—no extras except wood and candles; no table d'hôte, and I might dine where I liked.

The first introduction of a cleanly Englishman to French habits does not produce a pleasant feeling of surprise; and on the subject of the comforts of a bed-room, the French and English have scarcely an idea in common.

Let me describe my room; and before doing so, let me premise, that although the room in the *étages* below me are more showily furnished than mine *au quatrième*, the style and number of pieces of furniture are precisely the same. The Hôtel d'Ici Bas is thoroughly French. During the whole time I was in it, the only English people that came to the house were a gentleman and his wife, lately married, who had never been abroad before, arrived late one night, and departed as soon next morning as they could get their bill. They were not driven away by either the cooper or the chaudronnier.

My room, No. 14, is small, but well proportioned, with a gay paper and two windows, the curtains of which are of white muslin and rather faded blue damask. On the chimney-piece, and under a glass case, there is a gilt clock with the figure of French Fame blowing a trumpet—probably her own—and distributing leaves of laurel to several young men. The clock is not more correct than the lady blowing the trumpet. It strikes two at half-past eleven, which is rather a comfort on retiring early—and fifteen at six in the morning, which is rather a bore—but much cannot be expected for forty-five francs a month. Also on the chimney-piece there are a pair of imitation Sèvres vases, and a pair of bronze candlesticks—Cupids holding torches. Behind the clock there is a large pier-glass, which gives my face a distorted look whenever I try to shave in it. There is an uncomfortable easy chair in blue damask; a chest of drawers of inlaid wood, with a turn-down *secrétaire*; and a table with a leather top embossed with gold: all this for forty-five francs a month. But here my comforts end. I am six feet high, and the bed, with figured muslin curtains, is but five feet ten inches long. My basin is a large saucer. The milk jug of an English farmhouse holds more than my water jug. The floor is of red glazed octagon tiles. The carpet is two feet square, and there is not a foot-tub in the house. On my second morning in the hotel, where I lived for the first week, I asked for a foot-bath, but as my French was only moderate, the chambermaid, who in France is usually a man, was some time before he could understand me; and then he would not believe me, for the weather was bitterly cold. An incredulous smile covered his face when it was made clear to him that the tub was to be filled with cold water.

"The blood of Monsieur would rush to his head."

After waiting about an hour, and evidently disturbing some household arrangement, a tub was brought, containing a very small quantity of cold water. It was made of zinc, about fourteen inches high, eight broad at the bottom, and ten at the top, in shape like a section of a conic chimney-pot, but upside down. It answered the purpose pretty well—one foot at a time, and the rest was left to Providence. A suspicion crossed me at the time that this was not its usual purpose; but I should have left the hotel without knowing what that usual purpose was, if I had not one day, on leaving the table d'hôte, peeped behind a screen in the *salle à manger*, and there seen a garçon washing knives and forks, dishes, and plates in my *bain de pied*.

My curiosity cost me twelve francs; for, on leaving the hotel I purchased a zinc chimney-pot of my own. Whatever love the French may have for bathing in hot weather—and they tell me it is quite a mania—all I can say is, that during my week in that hotel of forty-eight beds, the chimney-pot was never engaged when I wanted it. Indeed, it was always in my room, except at dinner-time.

I do not mean to say that this description of my room in the hotel of Monsieur Blot represents what a visitor will get in the Grand Hôtel du Louvre; but here I am paying forty-five francs a month, and there he will pay one hundred and fifty at the lowest. He will have more carpet and gilding, and larger pier-glasses, that is all,—the style is the same; and though there may be foot-baths in the house, he will have to pay a franc or two each day for the use of them.

There is one all-sufficient reason why the French use as little water in their houses as they can avoid. It is paid for by the bucket.

The system of *égouts*, or drains for supplying water to cleanse the streets, to fill fire-engines, and to carry off the rain-water is complete; but every drop of water for household purposes is brought to the door in butts, and retailed by the water-carriers, who are a powerful corporation, numbering ten thousand, with whose privileges no government, since water-works were invented, has been strong enough to interfere.

The Emperor is strong, and called absolute; but he has many masters, not the least of whom is the water-carrier of Paris.

Nothing could be easier than to supply Paris with water to the very attics, for the Seine has a greater fall than the Thames at Richmond Bridge; but every attempt to introduce water-works is opposed by the water-carriers, who will not allow water to be taken from the fountains in greater quantities than in bucketfuls, except by themselves, and it is a hazardous thing for a touch-and-go dynasty to throw ten thousand able-bodied men out of employment.

Hence it is, that though the water is as good, if not better, than in any other capital in Europe, yet it answers one of the never-failing requirements of monopoly by being exceedingly dear; and hence it was, that when at last the chamberman brought me a foot-tub, it contained only a little more water than would have been required to boil an egg.

On the subject of domestic comfort, especially in their bed-rooms and staircases, the French have a great deal to learn;—on many points, in and out of doors, in which we are very scrupulous, they are not civilised, and at first they are quite startling.

* * * * *

There is no table d'hôte in the Hôtel d'Ici Bas, and the *locataires* dine where they like. I thought, at first, of living at a pension or boarding-house where everything is found,—bed, board, wines, and attendance—at prices varying from one hundred and fifty francs a month and upwards. But I could not face being obliged to dine for thirty days in succession with anybody, let alone people that I might not like, and it was not human nature—not my nature at any rate—to feel myself bound to dine anywhere for a month, and not long to dine somewhere else.

A dinner at a table d'hôte, even at the best hotels, is a tedious business, and to me not a very pleasing process. It generally struck me that the dinner would be more agreeable, if the dishes were a third less in number, of a little better quality, and not quite so cold. Besides there are few tables d'hôte at less than three francs, without attendance or wine, which last a guest is expected to drink for the good of the house.

This was more than I could afford, so there was nothing left for me but the Restaurants, establishments in which the French can give lessons to all nations. They are suited to all purses, and I can pay them the compliment of saying, that even when dining where the regular price for dinner was as little as two francs, I never received anything but the greatest civility, or saw anything but the utmost decorum.

Once or twice I found myself in the company of some young ladies who were rather gaily dressed, and had their hair parted on one side; but if they really were not ladies, they behaved as such in my presence, and their mode of life at home was the business of their parents and guardians, and not mine.

Sometimes even with my cosmopolitan palate—(and the best of everything is good enough for me),—I did not quite like the dishes, and the meat was not always of the best quality—(English beef and mutton rather spoil a fellow for the Continent),—yet a dish was seldom put before me at a Restaurant that was not well cooked, and delicately seasoned.

If a man has a delicate palate and knows how to order a dinner; if he has a stomach perhaps a little on the wane; if he wishes to leave the table without the feeling of being loaded, but with an inclination to dance, he ought to live in Paris.

The soups on the *carte* at a Restaurant may sometimes taste rather vapid, but they are never hot with pepper, nor do they taste as if they were made of glue and water, as one often finds in England. The French poultry is the best in the world; no game can excel a capon, or a well fed *poularde*. The veal is good—not so white as ours, for it is not killed till three or four months old, and then not bled to death. Above all, the puddings, the dishes made of sugar and cream, and everything in the shape of pastry, are delicious.

But there are some things to be avoided, and *Rosbif* is one of them. As soon as the *garçon* sees a customer is an Englishman (and we are easy to identify), he takes rather a wicked pleasure in asking him to take *Rosbif*: but avoid it. A French ox has generally seen long service in the plough before being sent to the butcher.

From this circumstance, and the want of good pasture, which does not exist in France, and also from the fact that meat is never kept for more than three or four days, even in winter, and then it is baked instead of being roasted, in consequence of the expense of fuel, I may be believed in saying that the beef is literally as hard as a board.

Young France, who delights in extremes, has lately taken it into his head that underdone meat makes muscle, and tends to the development of the biceps. At present he is dining at the English Restaurants, where there is beef cooked to suit his fancy. He asks for it *saignant*, and it is scarcely cooked at all.

Also avoid the *vin ordinaire*, particularly where the dinner is so many francs, "wine included." Great efforts are made by Government to prevent adulterations in wine and other articles of consumption, but the manufacturers are too clever, and it is known that most of the *vin ordinaire* is made in Paris, and is not wine at all.

For the first month of my stay in Paris I dined at the different Restaurants, and probably would have continued to do so, if I had not for a few days felt rather unwell. Not wishing to leave the house, for the weather was as cold and bitter and changeable as it only can be in Paris, when it chooses, I asked Madame Blot if she would let me have some dinner in the hotel. I had noticed savoury smells at six o'clock, at which hour two or three of the guests dined with Blot and Madame.

"Would Monsieur dine with them in the kitchen?"

I did so, and never afterwards dined anywhere else, except on great occasions, or when I got my dinner for nothing. Madame did not leave the house more than twice during the winter. She took up her position early in the morning behind the counter, in a room about fourteen feet square, on the right of the entrance door. Here she sat from morning to night, with her feet on a *chauf-freterie* (a footstool containing a handful of live coals or charcoal), plying her needle at an endless border, which will be finished when Sisyphus has done with his rolling-stone. A glass door opened into the bedroom of Madame. This, in the daytime was nothing more than a passage to the kitchen, which was quite at the back. Here we dined, and dined well.

There was always either a *soupe au gras*, that is, with a gravy foundation, and containing vegetables, such as carrots or peas, or a *soupe au maigre*, which for simplicity and delicacy would have been a lesson to any English cook, plain or otherwise, that ever upset a pepper pot into a soup tureen. Then there came a small joint of mutton or veal, (what odd joints a French butcher does cut!), or a *poulet*; then an *entrée*, followed by a *purée* of peas or spinach, served by itself, and a salad of beet-root and *Mars* (query the spelling), which is

a winter green something like water-cresses, but which I never saw in England. There was as much light Bordeaux as we chose, a dessert, a cup of strong coffee, with the invariable *petit verre* as a finish.

These dinners had many charms in my eyes. They were served well, by Blot himself, and of course hot, for we were dining in the kitchen. Everything was probably inexpensive, but it was undeniably good. The bread was like a cake.

The Blots may not have made much profit by us, but our dining in the kitchen enabled them to have a better dinner than they otherwise would have had. Madame eats little, but she is a delicate feeder, and she and I perfectly agree on one point—we both love a change dearly. The same dish never appears twice in the same week, except by particular desire.

Women are very observing. Madame probably saw, from my habits of life, that my finances were not very flourishing; and when she gave me my bill at the end of the month, I was almost ashamed to pay it. There were several things to be learned in the kitchen. I saw how Blot made a *potage au gras* and a *maigre*, a *purée* of vegetables, a *rot au rent*, and above all a salad. I also learned how, with a handful of coals or charcoal, and a *fourneau* or range forty inches long and thirty-four wide, a dinner could be served hot and fresh for a party of eight. The fuel consumed in this kitchen in a year would not keep going the kitchen of an hotel of the same size in England for one week.

CHAPTER II. OUR COMPANY IN THE KITCHEN.

THERE is a theory that the science of French cookery is a necessity consequent on the hardness of the beef and mutton, without which science no human stomach could digest them, and there would be an end to the population.

I have also a theory that the taste in dress displayed by a Frenchwoman, is a talent given to her by Providence to compensate for her ugliness, a talent without which she could not induce the male to marry her, and there would be an end to the population.

A Frenchwoman is the ugliest female of the human species. An African negress, with her flat nose and thick lips, is not very attractive; but her ugliness has a national type, and cases are known in which a European, after twenty years on the West Coast of Africa, and seeing nothing else to make him discontented, has become reconciled to her, as we do after a time to nearly everything else in the world, and as I did to the cooper on one side and to the chaudronnier on the other. But each individual Frenchwoman has an ugliness of her own, whether it be the ugliness of a tiger, or of a ferret, or of a monkey, or a combination of all three, in which last case, however, the monkey usually has a slight preponderance.

There is something fearful in the expression of a Frenchwoman of the lower orders when her animal instincts are excited—by jealousy, for instance, or when she is paying money, a severe trial to most faces. Come with me to-morrow to the Halle Centrale, a market for everything, near the church of St. Eustache. We will watch the

women haggling and parting with money, and you will be satisfied, as I am, that within a not very long time previous to the historical period, the natives of France were crossed with a monkey. Look at that respectably dressed woman haggling for giblets! her hair comes down the ridge bone between her temple and forehead till it actually joins her eyebrows. This is a certain sign of there having been, some time or other, a monkey among the branches of the family pedigree. Even in a ball-room, where she is all smiles, and is looking all she knows, a Frenchwoman will try—for she is a great general—to divert your attention from her face to her dress; but do not be diverted; look at her features, and you will see nothing but tiger, ferret, and monkey.

Oh, my fair fellow-countrywomen! what a comfort it is for us to think that you can give a Frenchwoman all her petty arts of dress, and still beat her! Yet you might show a little more taste in your choice of colours, for I have had to blush for many of you lately in the Bois de Boulogne.

These remarks are necessary as a preface to an introduction to my landlady.

Dear Madame Blot! you are the kindest and best of women: you were a mother to me when I was in sickness and poverty. But you are plain, even for a Frenchwoman. Yet so neat and tasteful is your poplin dress, so well does that ribbon suit your grey cat's eyes, and your outward cuticle (it cannot be called a complexion), so elegant are your manners, and so charming is your conversation, that it would be an actual intrusion to look at your face.

Like all her race, Madame has a scrubby head of hair—but I will not describe her, for, to tell the truth, I was in the house for a whole winter, and never looked at her face but once, and that once quite by accident in the beginning of spring. I would have left Paris in total ignorance of what she was like, if her parrot (such a parrot! although born in Martinique, it has a much better Parisian accent than either I or the garçon) had not bit her finger one dull day. Parrots are subject to dyspepsia in dull weather. Madame had a weak moment, and did what few women can afford to do—she frowned. I took a side-look at her face, and the illusion was over. We remained good friends, but from that moment to the day of my departure she was *moitié tigre, moitié singe*.

Madame has thirty-eight years, and the beautiful figure of a woman of five-and-twenty—without stays. Her vanity requests me to satisfy myself on this point. A fine foot and ankle, also called to my notice on the plea of her suffering from cold feet. She says she gave way early in life to the use of a *chaufferette*, till at last it is of no use to her.

"Would Monsieur feel her feet?"

The foot and leg were cold indeed—cold as marble, and well chiselled marble, too.

I cannot give a very clear account of my landlord, or as Madame calls him, *Mon Blot*, on ordinary occasions, or *mon chéri* when she wants anything. He is about fifty, a thorough Frenchman, with a deal of devilry and *bonhomie*, and a stubble head. He talks freely on most subjects,

except the Emperor, whom he never mentions, and himself only now and then. I asked him several questions, in a careless off-hand manner, about his antecedents, more for civility's sake than anything else, before finding out that the antecedents were delicate ground. And then I became very anxious to know all about him—of course—but I had to guess him, for he was hard to pump.

He was in England from 1848 to 1851, and how he can have been there so long and know so little of the language and everything English, would be unaccountable, if we had not evidence of how completely men can shut eyes and ears when determined not to use them. Instances are known in which emigrés of the first Revolution returned to France on the restoration of the Bourbons, without being able to speak a single word of English. Young France is learning English with a French accent which gives our language a peculiar cadence; but the generation just beginning to pass away, to which Blot belongs, thought French enough to pass a man through the whole world.

It may be taken as a rule that a man never learns the language of a nation that learns his, and *vice versa*—man never works when another will work for him. Everybody learns French, and a Frenchman seldom, if ever, speaks any language but his own. Nobody learns Russ, and the Russians are the best linguists in the world. Hence it is that a Frenchman is so much discontented when out of his own country. He cannot learn a language if he tries, and he is literally deprived of speech till he gets home again.

When Mon Blot was in England, Madame remained in Paris. He was *en garçon*, and says so, as if he wished to make it appear he had been there for his own pleasure, and had enjoyed himself. I asked a few questions, as it were casually:

"Was he *chef* in a nobleman's family?"

"Oh, non."

"Was he in the suite of the ambassador?"

This question had a wide margin, including every place in the embassy, from valet upwards.

"Oh, non. He was in the country—in the west of Scotland—fishing *à la ligne*—it was rather *triste*."

Fishing! in the west of Scotland with a rod and line! A strange thing for a Frenchman to do.

An idea flashes across me that the years of his absence tally with a revolution, a *coup d'état*, and a general amnesty that took place about that time—so I must ask no more questions. What does his beard say? Nothing, for there is not a bristle to be seen. In countries where there is neither liberty of the press, nor liberty of speech, men endeavour to express political tendencies by their hats and beards. And a very unbecoming way it is of speaking; because, if a man were to say I am an admirer of the Emperor Napoleon, he would not be believed unless he wore a beard *à la Billygoat*, which is the beard adopted by his Majesty. This is not the most fashionable beard in France, but it is by far the most common, for it is worn by the army to a man, and not only by the whole body of officials of every branch, but also by every one who hopes some day or other to be in the pay of government. The present fashion, however, of wearing the hair is

very becoming. It is cut quite short in the nape of the neck, increasing in length to the top of the head; when still short it is divided on one side, and brushed rather back so as to show the temples. With a well shaped head and muscular neck and throat, this cut gives a fellow a very manly appearance. There are, however, in the streets of Paris all sorts of beards, from the full Italian to the clean shave. This last is the pledge of total political abstinence, and is adopted by Mon Blot, who probably on one occasion, to which he does not allude, said as much as will serve him to the next revolution. His tongue may have brought him to grief, but he takes very good care that his beard shall never send him a second time fly-fishing into the west of Scotland.

A young man of the name of Louis Velay dines with us in the kitchen nearly every day. He is about twenty years of age, and has been studying for the last two years to enable him to pass an examination for the Engineers, and the other high branches of military science. He has great versatility of talent, and is pretty well informed without being well read, but he is the most thoroughly conceited French puppy that ever was seen. He says the examinations are very severe, which I believe they are, but he could succeed easily enough if he only gave his mind to the subjects. When he tried to pass, there were eight hundred candidates, and only one hundred appointments vacant. He was unlucky—he was plucked—he means to try again; but he is not very anxious about it, for he now thinks that diplomacy, or *la haute finance* (which is a cross between the business of Baron Rothschild and that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer) will be a better field for his talents. He says this quite seriously.

I was puzzled for a long time how to account for a genius like Louis Velay failing in anything that he undertook, for he lives in the room next to mine, and reads very hard—until I found out that he had the perversity of giving his whole mind, by fits and starts, to subjects not required in his examination. Music, for instance, on which science he talks very learnedly, though he does not sing or play any instrument. The French not being very strong in modern languages, he is only required to take up a little bit of German; but being true to his perversity, he has for the last year and a half devoted three hours a day of his precious time to the study of the English language. He has gone through a regular course of English literature, and is well informed on the merits of our old classics and the poets of the time of Queen Anne. Unfortunately, his professor of English is a Frenchman, and when he quotes Shakspeare, which he delights to do, it might be Molière, for I do not understand a word he says.

There is another, but not a regular, diner in the kitchen, one Alfred Duchêne, a sous-lieutenant in the Cent Gardes. He is six feet high, manly looking, and well made, which is not often the case with the French when above a certain height. Of course he wears a beard *à la bouc*, and shaves his cheeks and part of his temples, by which he would spoil his looks if he were not one of the handsomest men I ever saw. He also tries to

spoil his figure by a struggle with his waist—a universal struggle with French officers of all ages ; but he is fond of good things, which in this house he probably has for nothing, and in a few years the waist will have the best of it, and he will require a new cuirass.

Where are your brains, Alfred Duchêne ? With your face and figure, skyblue tunic, and jack boots ; gold epaulettes and white horse-hair plume from the crest of your helmet to your waist ? to be eight-and-twenty, and still a sous-lieutenant—where are your brains ? Have you no ambition ?

Alfred Duchêne begs to inform me that he cannot pass his examination. After dinner some of our neighbours drop in. There is a good coal fire for Madame's feet, and this is a great attraction, where fuel is sold by the kilogramme.* The first that appears is a Mademoiselle Marguerite—I have not arrived at her surname—a very handsome girl of about twenty, whose mother keeps the small lace shop round the corner. I could not guess for a long time where Marguerite got her regular features, large blue eyes, and good womanly expression, until she told me that she came from Strasbourg, which town, though within the French boundary, is essentially German in population and language—so much so, that when she came to Paris two years ago, she did not speak a word of French. It would not be prudent to ask too many questions about antecedents, for the answers might destroy the sentiment ; but I did ask how it was that she was still a demoiselle. She sighed, and said something about being too poor to marry. This is a great fiction among the spinsters of the middling and lower orders. Poverty in France, like the young man's promise in England, is made the excuse not only for being unmarried, but for all the liberties of single life.

But they really are very poor in the lace shop round the corner.

I know beforehand when the lieutenant is coming by the appearance of a diamond ring on Madame's finger, and of some Valenciennes lace, which sees light on these occasions only ; not that I think she is any attraction to him now—that is over—but between the revolution and the general amnesty, when the "chéri" was fly-fishing in the west of Scotland, Alfred must have been an exceedingly handsome lad of twenty, and she a smart ambitious woman of thirty ; two periods of life between which there are often very strong affinities. She is naturally proud of him, and therefore glad to see him. He comes for the cupboard, and a very good cupboard it is too. Alfred talks in a careless unguarded manner on most subjects, even the Emperor, and particularly the Empress, which is not very wise, for he is one of the Body Guard. He has also some dreadful sentiments about female virtue which appear to shock Madame, and others about religion which really do startle Marguerite, whose confidence in Sainte Monica, the guardian saint of her native village, is something quite beautiful.

But Alfred is a good fellow for a Frenchman, and liberal. If he had ten cigars in his case he would divide them with me *en frère*. I like him vastly—he is such a thorough vagabond.

After dinner we play *rampse*, a curious game like five-card loo, but at which nobody wins, and the loser puts two or three sous into the pool. A *partie* takes up as much time as a short rubber at whist, and it will be seen that it requires a great deal of attention to enable any one of us to lose half a franc in an evening.

At the end of a week, if the pool has accumulated to ten francs, which it sometimes does when we have been hard at it, we invest the amount in a supper, consisting of a galantine of fowl, a salad, roasted chesnuts, and the dinner wine. Sometimes, in a weak moment, I stand a bowl of rum punch, which is brewed strong for Blot and me, and very sweet to please Madame.

And here my French begins to thaw, and comes down in an avalanche of irregular and reflected verbs. Monsieur Blot also softens and relates an anecdote of *himself* and an English countess ; but as he mentions no names or dates, except that it occurred when he was "in English," as he calls it, nobody can contradict him. The lieutenant sings a song of which I do not catch the exact meaning, but the words *jour* and *amour* are heard jingling at the end of the burden. The ladies are delighted, and I applaud when they do. This brings us to about twelve o'clock. The men salute each lady on both sides of the cheek, and we part for the night.

(To be continued.)

* About 2½ lbs.

A NIGHT ON THE ICE.



SHORTLY after my arrival in Canada, a severe accident, received on a shooting expedition, caused me to be placed for a time under the hospitable roof of the stipendiary magistrate of Tircouaga, one of the prospective cities of the far west; and during the severe illness that followed, I could not have received more kindness had I been in my own home. When I left the woods the tints of autumn were flushing them with crimson and orange, as if their leaves had suddenly burst into blossom; but ere I looked on them again their glories had all vanished beneath the stern sway of the northern winter, with its train of biting frosts and deep snows, while the broad winding Tircouaga river, which I had last seen so blue and wavy, was now hushed and stilled by the universal ice-fetter.

To me, but recently arrived from England, it seemed strange how, amid so wild a solitude, this advent of a six or seven months' winter could be welcomed as I saw it by those around me. I did not yet know that winter was the only season when the bonds of their isolation were loosened, nor that the snow was the magician smoothing the difficulties of social intercourse in a district where neighbours dwelt miles apart, and the roads between them were mere lanes cut through the primeval forest, and abounding in holes, and ruts, and stumps of trees.

As soon as I was sufficiently recovered, I was

the companion of Mr. Norton and his daughters in all these exchanges of courtesy; and if I cared little for the visiting, I greatly enjoyed the drives in the swiftly-gliding sleigh over the gleaming snow; while, instead of leaves, the trees above our heads were hung with icicles, sparkling and flashing in the sunshine, like the ruby and emerald fruit and foliage of eastern story; and the long rhythmical chimes of our sleigh bells echoing through the arches of the trees, were the only sounds, save our own laughter, that broke the silence of those ancient woods.

We went to merry-makings, too—real backwoods “frolics”—held in rude barns, whose decorations were essentially rustic, but where the warmth of the hospitality compensated for every deficiency; the friend of a guest was kindly welcomed, the passing traveller was pressed to stay, and the wandering merchant, with his stores of finery and news, was received with delight, especially by the fair sex. Then the home-coming was almost as merry; the long strings of sleighs with their bells sounding cheerily through the midnight woods, and the joyous leave-takings of the occupants as each went his separate way.

On one occasion we had been to one of these festivities, some six or seven miles beyond the Tircouaga, and were returning home in two light one-horse sleighs, the first containing Mr. Norton and his elder daughter, the second her sister and

myself. The night was calm and beautiful in its dim snow-light, and the red glow of the northern streamers above our heads flashed and leaped and quivered in a thousand brilliant coruscations; while strangely and sweetly through the grey old woods sounded the clear girlish voices of the sisters, as from the different sleighs they sang in alternate stanzas one of the quaint old ballads of the middle ages. At length we reached the banks of the Tircouaga, which lay between us and our home, a mirror of ice, and we at once commenced its passage. As we swept quickly on, it seemed to me that some other sound mingled with the firm foot-falls of the horses, and the chime of their bells—a low threatening murmur like the echo of a distant tempest. But Mr. Norton drove gaily on, as if he either heard it not, or thought nothing of it, and I dismissed it from my mind, until as we drew near the centre of the river, strange dark spots, like cloud-shadows, began to fleck its gleaming surface.

The next instant one appeared right on Mr. Norton's path, and too close for him to avoid. With a long leap the horse bounded over it, and as the sleigh was drawn quickly after, there was a splash that told it had struck against water. I could see Mr. Norton spring hurriedly up.

"Back, back, for your lives!" he cried to us; "the ice is breaking up!"

I turned to follow his directions, but it was too late—two or three such spots lay between us and the bank. I looked around; they were rapidly appearing on every side; and then I remembered to have heard that the ice of the Tircouaga, like that of several other Canadian rivers, was treacherous in consequence of hot springs in the bed of the river, which at times burst forth; and that particularly in the early part of the winter the morning would see the river covered with ice, of which before evening not a trace would remain.

Perceiving how matters were, Mr. Norton bade us follow him, and quickly, for that not a moment was to be lost; and then dashed off at a rapid pace for the opposite bank, leaping the chasms, and speeding lightly on over the frozen portions, as if he hoped by swiftness to diminish the danger; and with the same breathless speed we hastened on in his rear.

Meanwhile, larger and more numerous grew those dark blue spaces, and longer and more frequent our horses' leaps. At length there came a chasm mine could not venture. I looked eagerly round for some more favourable spot; but as my eye glanced onward, it fell on constantly-widening water, until it had gone the circuit; and, with a sensation of surprise and horror, I perceived that we stood upon an ice island, from which the surrounding ice was rapidly retreating. I looked after Mr. Norton; but, unsuspecting of what had happened, he was still making his way with arrowy speed across the ice; so I felt we were left to our own efforts for escape, and my utter inexperience rendered the chances few indeed, unless we should again draw near enough to the main ice to leap the space between; and none can tell how anxiously I watched each movement of our raft as it began to yield to the influence of the current. But each fathom that we

were swept down the river seemed to bear us an equal distance from its icy borders, and we soon found ourselves floating on a comparatively open space of water, and surrounded by numerous ice-islets.

I could almost have echoed poor Annie's cry of agony when the certainty of our position burst upon her, so fearful was it. Alone at midnight, on a fragment of ice, floating down a rapid river whose future course I knew not, while on each side stretched tracts of crumbling ice, and beyond them rose banks of inaccessible steepness! What could exceed the desolation of such a position, and what hope could it leave to us of life? While, to complete our misery, we had not even the power to struggle against our fate, but must passively await its coming.

How deeply I pitied my young companion, as she sat there weeping such bitter tears. It was hard for her to part with life, after sixteen years of such bright and joyous experience as hers had been; hard to lay it down thus suddenly and fearfully, absent from all she loved, and yet harder the unresolvable fears for her father's and sister's safety which our own danger had awakened. I tried to utter words of consolation as I wrapped the poor girl in the buffalo robes from the chill night air that our inaction rendered doubly cold. She looked a sad contrast to the bright creature of the last few hours, whose joyous ballad-strains were yet lingering in my ears. But when the first shock was over, poor Annie struggled bravely with her grief, and during the remainder of that long, dreary night of peril she sat calmly by my side, the most patient and resigned companion man ever had in danger.

Meanwhile, the river was bearing us swiftly on past rocky headlands, and dark pine forests, waving above lofty cliffs, on to yet wilder and sterner regions, where it seemed even the red man would scarce pitch his wigwam. Sometimes the river swept us smoothly along on its broad bosom, at others it contracted into narrower limits, and hurried on with a quicker current; and as our frail raft was swayed about by the broken water, we oft-times thought either that it would part, or we be swept from its slippery surface, while every now and then our poor horse beat the ice wildly with his hoof, and, as he recognised its unsoundness, his long shrill cries of distress and terror rang far and wide over the river, and quivered through the dismal woods beyond.

Day at length broke upon us, still floating down that lonely river, between its frowning banks, and on our raft, whose limits were now small indeed. Death seemed close upon us in one of his most repulsive forms, and we no longer pretended blindness to his coming, but spoke together as they should whose hour was at hand.

Suddenly the river took an abrupt bend, and, aided by the waters of another river, which here fell into it, spread almost to the dimensions of a lake; but still it was bordered by those monotonous, wall-like banks, shutting out every hope. At length we sighted something like a chasm dividing the cliff down to the water's edge. I sprang to my feet in a moment. Here was at least a chance of life—the first that, during all

those wretched hours had presented itself—and I resolved at once to profit by it.

Without a moment's delay the horse was cast loose from the shafts, and Annie was tied securely to his back, then with a few words of encouragement and hope to the poor young girl, doomed to so many hardships and dangers, I took the halter in my hand, and sending the horse into the water, leaped in myself, and then commenced swimming to the shore.

But the struggle was a long and arduous one, for we were more than a mile from the land, and both the horse and I were cramped and stiffened with cold. Many a time I thought the effort was in vain, and that neither the horse nor I would ever reach the shore, that to my weariness seemed to recede as we advanced. Moreover, the current pressed strongly against us, striving to sweep us down beyond our goal, against the steep rocky barrier that lined the water. Fortunately the hot springs had raised the temperature of the water, for poor Annie's girlish form was almost hidden in it, as the waves gurgled and surged around her, sometimes even sweeping above her head. But the young girl's courage rose with the occasion, and she bore uncomplainingly this new phase of suffering.

But they strive hard whose prize is life, and after more than an hour of hope, and doubt, and fear, we reached the land we had never hoped to tread again. As we emerged from the water the wintry wind pierced through our saturated clothing, with an icy chill that threatened to freeze them on us. Providentially, in our need, we found a settler's house near at hand, where we obtained dry clothes, refreshment, and the loan of a horse and sleigh, in which we were soon speeding along the road to Tirconaga. As we proceeded, fresh fears for her father's and sister's fate assailed poor Annie, which were only set at rest when she found herself in their arms.

Since then, the chances of a soldier's life have brought me through many adventures, but none have left so deep an impression on my mind, as that long and terrible night upon the ice; nor shall I ever cease to remember with deep affection and esteem the young girl who was my gentle and heroic companion in its suffering and danger.

ANDREW MITCHELL.

SWANKA !

OR A NAVAL NOVEL, AFTER THE MANNER OF
CAPTAIN —.

PREFACE.

In offering this story to the public, the writer craves the indulgence of his readers in their criticisms of the nautical terms. Never having been further seaward than the port of Gravesend on the one hand, and Battersea Bridge on the other, his only means of studying nautical character and acquiring naval terms has been by attending the performances at the transpontine theatres ; so the defects must rest on the heads of those bold British tars who are always "shivering their timbers," and fighting terrific combats at the minor theatres. The language has been somewhat modified to suit the times.

CHAPTER I.

I sail in the good ship "Cat-o'-nine-Tails," under my uncle, Lord Tartar.—Am blown up and blown away.

"Pitch the mainmast overboard, and splice the main-deck ! Throw her up to the wind's eye, Mr. Smith, and be hanged to you ; the service is going to the deuce, and there's not a man amongst you who knows his duty."

"Another spar has gone, my lord," remarked the carpenter, respectfully touching his forelock.

"Another spar !" shrieked Lord Tartar, whose voice might be heard above the howling of the hurricane. "Turn the hands up, and give them six dozen a piece, and mind the boatswain gets double allowance. Mr. Goldfinch, attend to your duty, sir, instead of standing there, gaping like a stuck pig, or by Gad I'll put all the officers in irons, and marry the youngsters to the gunner's daughter. I will be obeyed on board my own ship, or I'll know the reason why, by Gad !"

"Sail on the lee bow !" cried the man in the foretop.

"What colours does she carry ?"

"French, my lord ; and she's making signals of distress. She's within two hundred yards of us now."

"Pipe all hands for action !" roared old Tartar. "I don't care the turn of a marling-spike for all the signals of distress ; but, by Gad, we'll send a broadside into her, as sure as I'm a peer !"

"I don't think the ship will bear a broadside now," observed the first lieutenant : "the hurricane is at its height, my lord, and she's pitching heavily ; a broadside will send her over."

"And serve her right, too, sir !" replied his lordship ; "who the deuce asked your advice, I should like to know. This is the worst ship in the service, by Gad ! and the worst officered, and the worst manned ; and if she goes to the bottom it serves the country right, by Gad, for sending such a lot of land-lubbers aboard. Are your guns ready, Mr. Trigger ?"

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the gunner, determined to do his duty."

"Then fire, and be hanged to you, you ugly son of a soap-boiler !"

The wind was blowing a hurricane, and the waves were mountains high ; and, in addition to the raging of the sea, the sky was so black that

we could hardly see our enemy across the short space which intervened between us. The Cat'-o-nine-Tails was fairly buried in the water from the recoil of the broadside, but rose again like a cork.

"'Bout ship, and give her another broadside !" screamed old Tartar.

"I beg respectfully to intimate to you, my lord," said the first lieutenant, stepping forward, "that the enemy has had all her masts and upper deck carried away, and may now be considered a wreck."

"Put him in irons !" roared the captain : "by Gad, there's a mutiny in the ship ! Does any other officer want to give me any advice, because if he does he had better say his prayers first, for I'll shoot him as dead as a nail, by Gad ! Fire, ye scoundrels, and be hanged to you."

Another broadside was poured into the luckless ship ; but, to our surprise, not a living creature appeared on her deck.

"Now, Mr. Bluejacket, you are skulking, as usual ; you are a disgrace to the family, and as great a rascal as your father, who is in Hades. Take the jolly-boat, sir, and board the prize ; and mind before you board that the swivel-gun and firearms are discharged into the port-holes. And, quartermaster, mind that the swivel is charged to the muzzle with broken iron and old nails, and let each of the men carry twelve revolvers and three cutlasses a-piece."

"I don't think it much matters, my lord," observed the quartermaster, "what the swivel is loaded with, as the boat will founder long before we reach the prize."

"Then go in her yourself," was his answer, "and I shall get rid of the worst officer in the ship."

Mr. Bluejacket, kind reader, was no other than your humble servant, and Lord Tartar was my uncle—one of the rough and tough old tars of a school which has passed away. People who didn't know him so well as I did, were prejudiced against him on account of his brusqueness of manner ; but I can answer for it, that at the bottom he was a good kind of man. Certainly he had a propensity for flogging his crew, and putting them in irons, but I must do him the justice to say, that if he put a man in irons he generally remembered to take him out again. But to return to our narrative.

The boarding party were at quarters ready to go, but the sea was so heavy that we could not get her alongside, and some delay was occasioned in getting the men in ; at last she broke away, and two men and myself had not embarked.

"Jump overboard, you sons of guns, and swim to the boat," shouted my uncle (as I shall now call him), "and Mr. Bluejacket, you remain here till the boat comes alongside."

To hear was to obey, and the two unfortunate seamen jumped overboard and sank immediately, and were drowned before our eyes. This circumstance rather appeased my uncle, who instantly became polite and amiable.

"My dear nephew," he said, "if you go to Davy Jones's locker, which I rather expect you will, be good enough to present my kind compliments to your father, and tell him that I am

enjoying myself comfortably in that state of life in which it has pleased Providence to place me, and as I don't intend any son of his to inherit the title and estates, if I can help it, it is my intention to marry as soon as I get on shore—and now, good-bye, my boy, and see if you can drop into the boat rather more cleverly than those two lubbers who were drowned a minute ago.

I felt that my fate was sealed, but I managed to drop into the boat.

"Good-bye, my boys," cried the quartermaster, rising up in the boat, "it's all over with us—if there's a man amongst you, you will bring that old villain to a court-martial."

"Fire into the boat!" sung out my uncle, "there's a mutiny amongst them, by Gad!"

"Do it yourself," replied the gunner, crossing his arms.

"Take that, you villain," said my uncle, firing his pistol at him. Fortunately the shot missed the gunner, but lodged in the thick part of the purser's thigh, which perhaps was the only thing Lord Tartar did which gave pleasure to the crew.

We had not gone a hundred yards from the ship before we lost all command of the boat—she was driven furiously against the side of the prize, and instantly foundered.

I have a dim recollection of going down fathoms deep and appearing again on the surface, and my last impression was that I saw my uncle standing on the quarter-deck rubbing his hands with glee.

CHAPTER II.

I presume that Britannia ceases to rule the waves, as I am taken prisoner by a slave-owner.—Cupid laughs at my fetters, and forges fresh ones for me.

WHEN I came to my senses, I found myself lying on a couch in a spacious half-darkened room. The couch I was lying on, and all the rest of the furniture were of solid silver, and the exquisitely polished mahogany floor was thickly inlaid with precious stones and mother-of-pearl. The sea-breeze was wafted through the window which opened down to the ground, and was fragrant with the perfumes of an orange-grove through which it rustled. Pictures of the best old masters were plentifully hung round the walls, many of which I was familiar with from having seen copies of them in our National Gallery. On rising from my couch I felt weak and languid, and on looking at myself in a mirror I found that my head had been shaved. My costume somewhat surprised me, as instead of my naval uniform I found myself attired in a pair of loose silk trousers and a velvet slashed jacket profusely ornamented with silver tilagree buttons.

My first idea was to look for some one who could explain my metamorphosis, but the windows were all protected by bars, and I could find no door to the apartment. At last my eye lighted on a silver bell. No sooner had I sounded it than one of the panels of the wainscot opened, and closed as rapidly behind a black boy who entered.

"Ah, massa, you be a good sleeper, by gum; for four weeks you've been dozing and chattering and singing, but mostly sleeping."

"Where am I? Whose house is this?" I eagerly asked.

"Yah! yah! yah! Walker!" grinned my sable friend, pointing significantly over his left shoulder.

Weak as I was I rushed at the nigger, and planted my foot, pretty satisfactorily, against that portion of his black carcass which could best resist a kick, and was about to repeat the dose when a second comer made his appearance in a similar manner to Pompey, which I afterwards found was the name of the boy.

"Holloa!" exclaimed the stranger. "Don't kick poor Pompey, that's my amusement, and Pompey gets a fair allowance without any one else's assistance; don't you, Pompey?"

"I believe you, massa," said Pompey, who was rubbing the part affected much more than was necessary.

"Then get out," laughingly replied his master, administering another kick: "there, you were shuffling a moment ago, so there's something real for you to rub in.—Well," turning to me, "and how is Mr. Bluejacket?"

I looked hard at the inquirer: he was a handsome, middle-aged man, and bore the stamp of Spanish blood in his face, which was finely chiselled—a profusion of black ringlets fell over his shoulders, and a restless eye and long drooping moustache gave somewhat of a fierce look to a countenance which I could not read.

"I feel as if I had been very ill," I replied; "but how did you know my name?"

"Your affectionate mamma had cautiously marked your linen," he answered, laughing, "in the first place, and, secondly, we have met before—now guess who I am?"

"You cannot be Don Skittleballos, the great anti-slavery agitator?"

"The same, my dear fellow; and now you will remember our meeting at the Duchess of Bijou's, in Belgrave Square, at the breakfast given to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe."

The whole circumstance flashed across my mind like lightning. "But how came I here, and where are my companions?"

"You came here on a spar which drifted ashore, and, believe me, you have had a narrower escape from fever than from drowning; your companions were picked up by one of my cruisers, and a good pick up it was, I can tell you. They are all safe, and doing their duty in that station of life to which it has pleased Providence, or the chances of war, to call them."

"But where are they?" I hurriedly asked.

"That is a secret," he answered; "be content to know that you are safe, and will be well treated. You must pardon this necessary restraint, as you are my prisoner; if you try to escape, I rather imagine you will come to grief: if you are contented to stay where you are, in a few months you will be put on board an English ship. I wish well towards you, but if you do not attend to my injunctions, why the fault will be yours. You can go anywhere you please about the garden or grounds, but take my advice and don't try to go beyond them, for there are some queer fellows in my establishment, who, you will

find, are rather more active than your London flunkys. We dine in an hour's time, and a mouthful of air will give you an appetite."

I wanted no second bidding to get an instalment of my liberty, at any rate, and went out into the garden. The rarest tropical plants were planted outside the deep verandahs, and long feathery palm-trees waved lazily in the breeze. The end of the garden terrace abutted on a lofty cliff, and the blue tropical sky was reflected in the boundless ocean which lay beneath. A magnificent schooner, evidently of English build, was at anchor a few hundred yards from the shore, with which exception not a trace of shipping was to be seen.

As I was returning towards the house, the sound of singing attracted my attention. The voice of the singer was low and soft, and there was a plaintive tone in the music which brought tears to my eyes. I crept quietly up to the window from which the music proceeded, and beheld one of the most beautiful creatures that mortal eyes ever lighted on. Her fair auburn hair fell over a snowy neck and shoulders; her features were oval and regular, but there was an expression of melancholy in the face which was sad to contemplate. I hesitated for a moment whether to go in or not; but modesty was never a failing of the Bluejacket family, so I boldly entered the apartment. She did not see me at first, so I had an opportunity of contemplating her appearance. She was dressed in a loose robe of white satin slashed with gold, which extended as far as the knee, and wore—what shall I call them? "pants," no, that's a Yankee word; "bags," no, that's vulgar—I am afraid, therefore, I must say trousers, after the Turkish fashion, which fell over a pair of embroidered slippers which encased two fairy-like feet. She started and blushed at my approach.

"Sing! O, pray sing for ever!" I exclaimed, in a rhapsody.

"I cannot sing for ever," she replied: "angels may do that, but it is not in my power."

"You are an angel already," I cried.

She smiled and bowed slightly at the compliment, and, snatching up her banjo, she struck up the touching air of "Hoop-de-doo-dum-doo." Seizing a set of bones which Pompey had left in the room, I accompanied her in her song. My thoughts were recalled to home by the old melody; and when it was finished I put my face in my hands and burst into tears.

"Where did you learn that beautiful song?" I inquired, as soon as my voice returned.

"In Whitechapel!" she answered with much emotion. "Can you keep a secret?"

"I can, I can!" I said.

At this moment Don Skittleballos entered the room. He started, and frowned at me.

"I had hoped," he said, "to have had the pleasure of introducing you to the Princess Swanka; but I see that you have introduced yourselves. Come, dinner is ready. Stay," he said, "I may as well introduce you formally, for fear of accidents. Mr. Bluejacket, allow me to introduce you to La Principessa Swanka—my fiancée. We shall be married the day after to-morrow, and you can act as my best man."

The princess looked imploringly at me; and I fancied I read her thoughts. "Is it too late?" I whispered to her, as I handed her into the drawing-room.

"Faint heart never won fair woman," she replied, tremulously. "I am an Englishwoman: save me, dear Mr. Bluejacket!"

I inwardly vowed to do so, or die; and my fate for death or love was sealed.

CHAPTER III.

A grand dinner off borrowed plate.—The Don opens his heart.—A conspiracy.

THE dinner was served in the most luxurious style. Plate, both gold and silver, covered the table, and a tribe of black servants attended on us. As I was leisurely eating my soup with what appetite I had, under the double influence of sickness and love, I was startled to observe the crest of the Duchess of Bijou on my spoon; and, on looking round the table, I saw the same heraldic device on the pieces of plate. The Don's quick eye caught mine.

"You are looking at the crests on the plate. They are a few trifles from the Duchess of Bijou when I was in London. Most of my plate consists of reminiscences of old friends."

I couldn't unravel this strange riddle, as I knew the duchess was not in the habit of giving away her plate. As soon as dinner was over, the princess left us, and wine was brought. The Don warmed into confidence, and finding me not very conversational, said:

"Bluejacket, you are puzzled to know who and what I am, and I don't mind telling you; as if you try to get away before I give you leave, you won't live to tell the tale, and you may tell it to whom you please after you are at liberty, for I shall be far from here soon after your departure. I am the Don Whiskerando Skittleballos who created such a sensation in London two years ago. My father was a Spaniard, and my mother was an Englishwoman: the former was hung for piracy, and the latter died of his ill-treatment. My sole object in visiting England was to get a clipper schooner built at Southampton, you saw her lying off the cliffs, and a good sailor she is, and she has shown her heels to a pretty many of your cruisers. By the bye, that ship which you riddled, and tried to take, was only an old hulk which we turned adrift, just to deceive your squadron, and this dodge paid pretty well, as old Tartar must have blazed half his powder into her. I was on board my schooner at the time, taking advantage of the darkness of the weather to run a cargo of niggers—don't start, my calling is apostolic, and I am a fisher of men—which accounts for your being picked up. To return to my story: as I was acquainted with the interior of many English gaols, I thought I might as well see the inside of some of your great mansions; so, money being plentiful, and all trace of my antecedents wiped out, I went to Mivart's. The 'Morning Post' announced 'the arrival of Don Whiskerando Skittleballos, who had visited England for the purpose of having a yacht built for the Brazilian Club, of which he is commodore.' As you may suppose, hundreds of cards were left for me, and I

was made a Lion. The whim pleased me, and I felt half inclined to lead what you call an honest life; i. e., live as hard as you can without being particular about paying your bills. I announced myself as an anti-slavery man, and was dragged to Exeter Hall meetings. By the way, the Duchess of Bijou's breakfast bored me; and men of my profession never being idle, I took the liberty of pocketing a few spoons and salt-cellars—here is one of them, try some salt out of it with your nuts. My yacht being built, I sent for my own crew; and the people in Cowes Roads were delighted at the way in which a native crew handled the craft. Some of your heavy dragoons and fresh-water men were very knowing on the subject, and I humoured them into the belief that they were right, although they knew nothing about it. I was made an honorary member of the Yacht Club, and started, as announced in the 'Morning Post,' for the coast of Africa. Thither I went, without any suspicion, shipped a cargo of niggers, and landed them safe in Cuba. Now," he added, "I think I have been pretty candid; and you may warn your English friends on your return, that when they make Lions of unknown foreigners, to keep an eye to their spoons."

"But why have you taken such care of me?" I could not help asking.

"Because," he answered, "you are a peer's nephew, and will be a peer some day, and if you don't turn up there will be the deuce to pay. I remember when I was in London, a bishop was a passenger in a railway train when an accident occurred, and there was more row about that bishop than all the rest of the passengers, so I took a leaf out of the English book in treating you well. However, I am rewarded, for I think you will be an agreeable companion. Let me only give you one more caution, don't be too polite to La Principessa, or you may find too much sugar in your grog some odd morning, as I cannot stand a rival."

Well! I thought, I am in a pretty fix. Here I am the guest of a man who treats me well, and tells me quietly that I shall be poisoned if I make any overtures to the angel whom I intend to marry, and coolly hints at my coming short home if I go out of bounds, or seek after my companions.

Being an invalid, I pleaded fatigue early in the evening, and went to bed, but sleep would not come to me. I tossed about in my bed in a fever of excitement.

"Bother the pillow!" I inwardly exclaimed, as I pitched it across the room, and once more laid down my fevered head—it came in contact with something hard—on looking I found it was a coil of rope. I struck a light for the purpose of examining it; to my surprise, I discovered that it was a silken rope ladder, a note was tied to it on which was written—

"When you hear me singing 'Hoop-de-doo-dum-doo,' let yourself down, and lie hid in the orange grove, and wait for my coming.—S."

I lay on the bed counting the minutes. The Princess was playing and singing to the Don, the fumes of whose cigar stole in at the window. I thought the signal would never come, when at

last I heard the long wished-for sound. Without another moment's consideration I followed the instructions contained in the note, and reached my hiding-place safely.

CHAPTER IV.

La Principessa's story.—A scheme for our escape, and its result.

I HAD hardly been five minutes in my place of concealment, before I heard a footstep in the garden, and the Princess walked leisurely by the spot where I was lying, in company with the Don. My heart beat violently, as the least rustling of the leaves would have betrayed me.

"My dear Don, do have the yacht ready against our wedding-day, as I long for a cruise amongst these beautiful islands," I heard her say.

"I will go now, and give the necessary orders," answered the Don, "if that will please you."

"Well," she answered, "it is a beautiful night, and I should like to go with you, if it was not for my cold, and I should be sorry not to be well on my wedding-day."

"So should I, too, dear Princess," he answered; "so go to bed, and soft be your slumbers. I will go to the yacht and sleep on board of her." So saying, he proceeded down the cliff, and hailed for a boat.

Well, I thought, you are a romantic scoundrel for a gentleman who steals spoons and kidnaps niggers.

No sooner had his footsteps died away, than La Principessa, who talked to him over the cliff as long as he was within hearing, came tripping back to me.

"Oh! my dear Mr. Bluejacket," she exclaimed, "I thought I should have died with fright, just now—but all's well that ends well. The Don would have shot you in a moment, if he had stumbled across you; but this is real luck getting rid of him, as we are safe till day-break. Now I have a plan for your escape."

"Not without you," I replied.

"That is as you wish, Mr. Bluejacket."

"Will you stick to me, if I get you away?"

"Close as wax," she replied; and we sealed the bargain after a fashion common to most civilised nations.

"Look here," she said, "the Don is gone for to-night, but we had better do nothing till to-morrow, as we must secure the schooner. Your men are all slaves in a plantation two miles from this. That scoundrel makes them not only work but sleep fettered together. I can get the key to their manacles now, and also the key of the armoury, and you must do the rest; their hut is exactly two miles from this, straight up the mountain, you can see the light now. The only thing which you must do to-night is to take all the arms out, and hide them in the garden. I will help you, and if any of the servants interfere, stab them; our liberty is as valuable as their lives."

"But who are you?" I asked.

"I am an Englishwoman," she replied; "and no more a Princess than you are. My name is Figgs, and my father is a grocer in High Street, Whitechapel."

"But how came you here?"

"By a Whitechapel and Blackwall omnibus," she innocently answered, "as far as the docks, and from Blackwall in a West India ship. I was going to Jamaica to marry my cousin, who is doing very well out there, accompanied by my maiden aunt; who, by-the-bye, was the plague of my life. The ship was taken by the Don's schooner, and the crew escaped, leaving my aunt and me behind. Well, do you know (I can't help laughing), the Don traded my aunt to a Yankee, who wanted a governess, for two bullocks

and a bale of tobacco, and brought me on here, and as you know, intended to marry me."

"Never!" I remarked, resealing our contract. "But how about the cousin?"

"Oh! I'll throw him over, of course; it is the fashion to do so in high life, and I am a Princess here, you know," she added smiling; "but now to business."

We set quietly to work, and secured all the arms and ammunition, and hid them in a cavity of some rocks near the house. The key of the sailors'



fetters was given into my keeping, and the only thing which remained to be done, was to abide the result of to-morrow's enterprise.

The Don returned in the morning in high feather. We chatted and talked merrily all day on his approaching marriage, and I led him on after dinner till he was three parts intoxicated. I insisted on having another bottle, and La Principessa, who entered the room, seconded me, and rallied him cheerfully on the propriety of making merry before his marriage. My first object was gained, as I had stupefied him with drink just as the night set in. "Let us carry your master up to bed, Pompey," I said, "and I will sit by him." We laid him on the bed, and he snored heavily. I signalled to La Principessa, who was outside, to come in, and having taken the precaution to tie his hands and feet, I left her sitting by him with a loaded revolver, with instructions to blow his brains out if he threatened to make a noise.

I obtained the keys of all the gates, and flew rather than ran to the hut where my poor comrades were. At my appearance they thought I was a ghost, but two bottles of rum which I produced assured them that I was a friendly spirit at any rate. Their shackles were soon undone, and the whole party arrived safely at the spot where the stand of arms was hidden.

Leaving the majority of the party outside the house to secure the servants, the quartermaster, the boatswain, two seamen, and myself, well armed, entered. We went at once to the Don's room. We found him wide awake foaming at the mouth with rage, and his guardian angel holding the pistol to his head.

"So you wish to be married, do you," said the boatswain, squirting a shower of tobacco juice into the Don's eye, "so you shall be in a moment," and he pulled down one of the silk bell-ropes, and unravelling it, constructed a very artistic "cat."

I tried to save the Don, but in vain.

"We will obey all your orders, Mr. Bluejacket, except in this instance. You have been well treated, but we have had monkey's allowance, and so shall he. If this young lady will retire we will make a spread-eagle of him in a moment. Pipe all hands for punishment!" roared the brawny seaman.

All the sailors entered into the joke heartily, and the Don received as fair a six dozen as any man ever had in this world.

I was quite exhausted by the fatigue and excitement of the last two days, and took some rest, which was much disturbed by the groaning of the Don after his punishment and the carousal of the sailors down below, who made the most of the delicacies provided for the wedding breakfast.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

We capture the schooner.—Arrive at Plymouth.—I find that I have a handle to my name.—The Don gives us the slip.—I am married.

THE next morning we held a council of war as to the means of taking the schooner. There were a dozen men on board her, and the small boat would not carry more than four or five of us, and we knew the rascals would sink our boat and go off with the schooner if they suspected treachery.

"The Don must hail the schooner," remarked the boatswain, who spoke last. "I'll manage. Look here, my dear," he said to him, "just you put that cloak on, and walk down to the edge of the cliff, and if you don't do what I tell you, over you go." The unhappy man rose and obeyed. "Cry, *ship ahoy!* now."

"Ship ahoy!" he cried in the most desponding voice.

"Speak up cheerfully," said the boatswain, giving him a lively prod with a dagger in the leg, "or you'll get another six dozen."

"Ship ahoy!" cried the poor Don as cheerfully as if he was going to his wedding.

"Shout, 'All hands ashore for my wedding.'"

He obeyed mechanically, and in a few minutes the pirates' crew, dressed in their best, pulled to the landing-place with a will. Our men being well armed, the pirates were secured in an instant, and the island and the ship were ours.

"And now for Old England!" we all cried.

"But what shall we do with these fellows?" I asked.

"Why, Mr. Bluejacket," replied the boatswain, "my impression is that we had better at the last moment let the niggers loose, and they will turn the tables on these scoundrels."

The advice was too good not to be followed. We gutted the Don's house of all which was valuable, and as the yacht was well victualled we had nothing to do but to go. We prepared the state-cabin for the Princess Swanka, as I still called her, and after we were all embarked, we gave the keys of the niggers' huts to Pompey, whom we sent ashore in the dingy, and we bade farewell to Pirates' Island.

The Don, heavily ironed, was brought away with us, and the Duchess of Bijou's spoons were not forgotten.

Under pain of instant death, the Don furnished

us with his chart, and we found, not much to our surprise, that the Admiralty charts of these seas were totally wrong. I promised the Don his life if we arrived safe in England.

"But what will you do with me?" asked the fallen hero.

"Why, I shall take you to London, and charge you with stealing the spoons,—first, on account of the dirtiness of the transaction, and secondly, as a warning to lion-hunters in Belgravia."

"Oh, Mr. Bluejacket," he whined, "I treated you like a gentleman!"

"Yes," I answered. "Why? Because I was heir to a peerage."

"But I learnt those manners in Mayfair," he replied.

This answer somewhat staggered me.

We had a good run, and made Plymouth in twenty-eight days. I at once went ashore and reported myself to the admiral.

"Gracious me, Mr. Bluejacket, are you risen from the dead?—or rather I should address you Lord Tartar."

"Lord what?" I asked.

"Lord Tartar, to be sure. Your uncle died at sea; and, to tell you the truth, I think he died at the right time, as that affair with the abandoned hulk would have cashiered him. He had a fever, after a paroxysm of passion, and he said that the surgeon was a fool, and the assistant-surgeon was an ass; he refused all treatment, and lay and swore at the fever till he got the worst of it. But come in to luncheon," he added, "my wife and daughters will be delighted to see you."

I accepted his offer, and after luncheon told my story, to their great astonishment. The young ladies were much interested about the Don, and wanted to know if he resembled Lord Byron's Corsair, and the prettiest of them threw up her eyes and said,

"He left the Corsair's name to other times,
Link'd with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

"I am afraid, my dear ladies," I remarked, "I have extinguished his only virtues, by robbing him of his intended; and as one of his crimes was stealing spoons, he was a petty larceny hero."

The civilities and attentions of the admiral's wife and daughters somewhat died away when they found that I had brought my fiancée with me. However, they could not resist making the acquaintance of a Princess, and Kitty Figgs made a great *furor* amongst the naval circles at Plymouth. She put off her female piratical dress, and appeared in a blue moire antique skirt without any crinoline or hoops, and a tight jacket with silver buttons.

Before she had worn this for a couple of days, the "La Principessa" costume was to be seen in all the windows in Plymouth, and all the ladies discarded their hoops, to a woman.

Our story now comes near its end. I married the Princess, as I still call her, at Plymouth, and a Royal salute was fired in her honour as we came out of church. I paid off the yacht and sent her to Cowes, where she now is, though an attempt was made to seize her by the builders of her, who had never been paid.

On arriving in London I found a case going on in the House of Lords, which was costing, as I was informed, some hundreds a day in fees, about the Tartar Peerage, which was supposed to be extinct. I settled the question by taking my seat, accompanied by the Duke of Bijou and His Royal Highness * * * ; and as there was no estate out of which to pay the expenses (for the estate was mine and I was alive), all the claimants, whose liabilities were enormous, went through the Bankruptcy Court, and the lawyers were never paid at all.

The Don was never tried for stealing the spoons. There was something high-minded about the man which made him shudder at the thought of standing in the dock of the Old Bailey on such a charge.

"I could," he said, "have well borne being an interesting criminal, with half Mayfair and Belgravia for spectators, on the charge of piracy and murder—but for stealing spoons!—bah! the idea chokes me."

During the voyage home, he became low and desponding, and we took all precaution to prevent his making away with himself, but in vain. He had contrived to secrete about him an extra large box of "*Professor Allaway's Pills as prepared for the Colonies*," and one morning he was found dead in his bed with the empty box by his side.

The niggers took possession of the island, and established the slave trade with all its horrors, repaying the ill-treatment which they received on the unfortunate pirates.

The Princess makes me an excellent wife. Her relations tried hard to penetrate into Belgravian society without much success. I am happy and contented ; our eldest child, a girl, was christened "Swanka," and we don't quite forget old times, as at a grand state ball at B—— P——, Kitty appeared in her pirate dress. We procured the release of Kitty's aunt, who married a black missionary.

So ends the story of Tom Bluejacket, late second lieutenant on board H.M. ship "Cat-o'-nine-Tails," now The Right Hon. the Lord Tartar, who bids you farewell !

F. S. GALE.

LIFE IN A FRENCH KITCHEN. By C.

(Continued from p. 97.)

CHAPTER III.

ON my first arrival in Paris, being a thorough idler, and having nothing to do after dining at a Restaurant, which pleasure could not be well extended beyond seven o'clock, I went a few times to the theatres, although doing so was contrary to my rule of only indulging in amusements which cost nothing. However, either from the actors speaking too quickly, or from my limited knowledge of French, I only made out half what was said, and lost all the points; so I gave it up. But when I came to understand what the natives said, even when they were talking among themselves, I visited the pit of every theatre in Paris, except the opera, which was beyond my finances.

One day, I proposed to Madame Blot, that we should make a party for one of the theatres. Madame, who loves an outing in summer, can scarcely be induced to cross the threshold in winter; but the natural love of a Frenchwoman for a theatre overcame her expected sufferings from cold feet, and we arranged to go the following Sunday to the Gymnase, to see a piece called

Les Parents, which had been acted one hundred and seventy-four times, and still drew houses. The party consisted of Madame and Marguerite, the lieutenant and myself, the *cheri* being left at home to guard the house, and to have a hot supper ready when we came home. The feet of Madame being carefully encased in woollens, boots, and goloshes, so as entirely to stop the circulation, and the evening being fine, we started to walk, and arrived in about twenty minutes at the doors, where we joined the *queue*. There is no crowding or crush at the doors of a French theatre, as in a civilised place like London, but the people fall in, two and two, like a company of soldiers in file, sometimes extending sixty or seventy yards along the *trottoir*. I do not know whether this is done by mutual consent, or by orders of the police, but an attempt is never made to get in front of those who are already in the *queue*. Half an hour before the play begins, the bureau is opened, and about six or seven of the two *queues* (for there is a second one for the gallery) are admitted at a time. They pay their money through a wire grating, and are ushered into their places, without the most tender female suffering any annoyance. This would never do in England. It would be infringing on the liberty of young Bull, if he was not allowed to jostle the old lady and her two daughters, and to make their visit to the play as disagreeable as he could.

All this is a pleasant contrast to our system; but indeed the whole business of a theatre is better organised there than in England. The seats are more comfortable, and even in the pit there is room for the legs—a great consideration to a man of six feet. The house holds a certain number, and that number is admitted, and no more. It is well ventilated, and sufficiently lighted with one large chandelier and the foot-lights. There is no shouting or uproarious applause. A spectator may be amused, but he is not expected to applaud more than he would do in a drawing-room. Those men in front of us, in the first and second rows of the pit, are the *claqueurs*—that is their *chef* with the diamond breastpin—and they do all the applause. They pay nothing for their places, and receive a small allowance from the actors: a curious system, but it saves a deal of confusion. The audience is very well behaved, great courtesy being shown to ladies. Indeed the audience never gave me any other idea than that it was composed of a quiet set of ladies and gentlemen who came to be amused at something going on in a large drawing-room. The door-keepers are women, who practise a little extortion on their own sex—but it is only for a few sous, for footstools.

There was only one piece to be acted, *Les Parents*, which means "relations" as well as parents. It was in seven acts and eighteen tableaux—something to undergo; but the interest of the audience never flagged for a moment. The *intrigue*, or plot, was not only considerably involved, but the thread of it was nearly lost to me altogether, when several events, which had happened previous to the first act were told by an old negress in nigger-French, a language I do not

understand. However, thanks to some explanations by Marguerite between the acts, I made out the following story.

There are two sorts of heroes on the French stage; a popular ruffian who sticks at nothing, and never makes love for an honest purpose; and a spoony hero who gains the prize in a school of design, or can ride without stirrups; who does all the honest love in the play, and whose fate in the end is generally matrimony. There are two heroes in *Les Parents*,—a spoony and a vagabond.

An old Monsieur Dubois is married to a young wife, and they have one son, but they live separate, in consequence of her having given him cause to be jealous of a Count de Champsey. During the first revolution, Dubois escapes with his child to England, and afterwards settles in one of the West India Islands, where he dies and leaves his property to his son, provided he never speaks to his mother, to whom he also leaves a small annuity, which she loses if she speaks to her son. The ship in which the boy is returning to France is wrecked, and all hands are lost except young Dubois, and another boy of the same age, and a black woman, by whose means the two children are saved.

Fifteen years are supposed to have elapsed between the first and second acts, which opens with Madame Dubois, rather low in the world, and longing all the more to see her son, because she is forbidden to do so.

The old black nurse, who is the mysterious character in the play, hints at having something on her conscience, and excites the curiosity of Madame Dubois by asking if she would know her son if she met him.

Madame says she would, by a mole on his neck.

Young Dubois, who is the spoony hero, is in love with Marie, the daughter of the very Count de Champsey already mentioned, and he has a rival in Auguste, the vagabond hero and the other boy who was saved from the wreck. But as the latter has nothing but lieutenant's pay, she is betrothed to Dubois, although her heart is naturally with Auguste, who is rather a fine fellow with all his faults.

Madame Dubois watches her son's door till she sees him, but she cannot rest till she has also seen the mole on his neck, which must be done without his knowledge. She manages to get into his house by being employed to make some alterations in the curtains of his bed; and a fine scene takes place between the son and the agitated mother, as she endeavours to look for the mole on his neck while he is dressing. The mother's doubts and love, and the son's absence of all expression, except a little impatience, made a good contrast, and were well acted; and the whole scene, in which not twenty words were spoken, commanded great attention.

Auguste, who does everything compatible with noble ruffianism, tries all methods to get possession of Marie, and, on one occasion, would have carried her off, if it had not been for a very fine dog, whose clever performance on the stage is, no doubt, one of the causes of the success of the piece.

He has now to join his regiment in Spain, whither we follow him through two rather long acts, in which he performs wonders on a grey charger, also produced on the stage.

Among other feats, he rides through an embrasure of a field-work, sabres all the gunners, and is only prevented carrying off the colours of an English regiment by their having been captured the week previous in a victory, the name of which is not mentioned.

In the sixth act, Dubois and Marie are about to be married, when his mother enters. She tries to get near him to whisper something in his ear, but he will not listen, and she is put out. But, after the marriage, she contrives to meet him alone, about ten o'clock at night, Marie having gone to her bed-room, when she tells him that she is his mother, that he is the son of the Count de Champsey, and therefore married to his half-sister. Dubois, very naturally, is not a little startled, but a discussion takes place—which is fairly argued on both sides—whether he ought to proceed further or jump out of the window. He comes to the conclusion that the latter is the correct thing to do under the circumstances; so, tearing himself from his mother, he throws himself with a run from a window at the back of the stage. Madame faints, and Auguste—who has returned from the wars a colonel covered with glory—here enters. She recognises her real son from his likeness to the Count de Champsey; he shows the mole on his neck, and the black nurse confesses that, to make her old master's child rich, she changed the children at the wreck.

Madame sends Auguste to tell Marie what has happened, and the scene changes. The audience have been very attentive, and now become quite silent. A pin would have been heard to drop when Marie appears in her night-dress (and very nice she looked) and passes into the bridal chamber. But when Auguste crosses the stage, and follows her into the bed-room—knowing, as we all do, that he is capable of any mortal thing—I felt Marguerite's heart thumping against my arm, and when I looked round the girl was as white as a sheet.

Two years are supposed to have elapsed, and in the last tableau Marie and Dubois (who, of course, was not killed by the jump from the window) appear in a drawing-room with the rest of the characters. She is dressed in a drab moire, with one deep flounce trimmed with crimson velvet. This is her eighth change during the piece—one more beautiful than another. There is no applause, but you are aware, by a low murmur, that the dress is creating a sensation. She announces that Dubois, not being her half-brother, is still her husband, and that she has presented him with a son and heir—also produced on the stage in the arms of the black nurse. Each of the characters now repeats a couplet, and the curtain falls.

Marguerite, who realised every situation in the play, is silent all the way home. All her sympathies were with Dubois, and she firmly believed that Marie was *en chemise* behind the scene when Auguste went into her bed-room, and she cannot shake off the idea. By the time we reach home she is more cheerful, and comes quite round at the

sight of the supper provided by the *chéri*—a brace of partridges *aux truffes* and a magnificent *mayonnaise*.

Let me try to draw a comparison between the English and French stages. We are supposed to have the best of it in the language, for, though French is very telling in light conversation, and capable of great point and precision, yet it fails in melodramatic power independent of the situation. The tones are nasal, and the chant (or sing-song, as it may be called,) of a person declaiming, though musical, is monotonous and tiresome to a degree. When sitting with closed eyes, a little beyond the distance of hearing distinctly, it would not be easy to say whether the sing-song is from Regnier the actor, Monsieur Dupin the senator, or Monsieur Coquerel (père) the distinguished preacher in the Rue Marbeuf. To overcome this monotony, an expressive manner is required. A Frenchman does not assume it, for he has it naturally, and in the ordinary conversation of daily life he has as much manner as an Englishman assumes on the stage. Without this assumed manner English acting would look bald and cold. Hence it is that the French do not appear to be acting in light or genteel comedy, for nothing more is required of them but their natural manner, whereas our actors always seem to be acting a part.

The French come on the stage in a quiet manner, as if nobody was watching; they join in the conversation, as if nobody was listening but the actors, and they move about as if they were in a room. They have much saluting and kissing of foreheads and both cheeks, which they do gracefully, and naturally too, for it is the daily custom among relations, and sometimes among friends when they meet even in the streets.

In a play which I saw in Paris, called *Cendrillon*, and founded on our Cinderella, the favourite daughter, a grown-up woman, fairly lived in her mother's arms, and they kissed each other every two minutes. The table-cloth is generally laid in one of the scenes of a French play—not that a meal has anything to do with the plot, but it is made a vehicle for dialogue. All this manner and these petty occupations tend to employ the hands and to fill up scenes which, on the English stage, look bald and bare, as if an artist had painted a picture without a background.

French Tragedy is a very painful lady. Her breast is ever heaving with passion, and her hands trembling with emotion above her head. She has no dignity, for she cannot keep her hands quiet for a moment. To me there is no greater punishment than a French five act tragedy—“*Iphigénie en Aulide*,” for instance. It has very little action on the stage, and it is played from beginning to end without a change of scene or even fall of the curtain; and the ladies wear no crinoline. It is written in couplets, which always have a jingling effect which Rachel may have overcome, but I never saw her act.

The forte of the French players is genteel comedy, and in this line they can give us many lessons in grace, manners, and imitation of real life. They certainly have no actors equal to ours of the first class, but they have a much higher

average. I never saw a “regular stick” on the Paris stage. Most of them—particularly the women—have an easy manner, are perfectly self-possessed, and look the part without any great exaggeration in the make-up.

When they have to act gentlemen (a difficult part for them, as they have no very clear idea of what we call gentlemen, the word *gentilhomme* only extending to birth and dress,) they look and play the part as well as Frenchmen can and it is only now and then that we see a Frenchwoman on the stage that does not look like a lady. Whereas our actresses have left an impression on my mind that they are lady's-maids promoted.

The French are great play-goers. Being good judges of acting they go to see the play, and to be amused, and therefore make a most attentive audience. No conversation is allowed during the acts. Parties not satisfied with the performance, and showing signs of disapprobation are walked out, but whether their money is returned at the door or not I cannot say.

It is said that the French are excitable, but they gave me more the idea of being frivolous—easily pleased and patient in their amusements. They will make *queue* on a wet night, half-an-hour before the doors are opened, and they will wait another half-hour before the curtain rises to one long piece of perhaps seven acts, and an indefinite number of tableaux. They delight in small jokes, and there are a few of not a very delicate description, which no amount of repetition can deprive of their point, and without which a French farce would no more be complete than an English pantomime without a hot poker.

On the subject of propriety on the stage, their ideas and ours differ not a little, and a great deal takes place, and is applauded with them, that would damn a piece at once with us.

In a farce called *Une chambre à deux lits*, which is the foundation of our *Box and Cox*, two of the actors take off their clothes, except shirt and drawers and get into the two beds. In *Les Parents* the audience attached no indelicate idea to the part where Marie, on her wedding night, appeared in her night-dress and went into the bedroom, followed at once by a man that was not her husband.

If this play was translated into English, and had its French sentiment turned into corresponding English pathos,—if it had the advantage of the best cast and *mise en scène*, it would not live beyond the first act on any boards in London.

CHAPTER IV. TOO HOT IN THE KITCHEN.

ABOUT this time I offended my landlady and blundered into genteel society,—two great mistakes.

A Parisian never travels, and speaks no language but his own. If he is driven from home by business, or by the heat of Paris, to London or to the German baths, he is in exile till he is again inside the barrier. Like all untravelled people he thinks that his country is the most beautiful and the most glorious in all the world; that the natives are the most enlightened and civilised; and that

Paris is everything that is attractive, and gay. He resents, as a personal insult, the pretensions of other nations to compete with his.

Now, Madame Blot, who never was out of Paris in the course of her life, is exceedingly touchy on this point; and not being aware of her weakness, I was constantly giving offence, which was quite unintentional on my part, and, it must be said, as soon forgiven on hers. But, in the course of ten minutes of one unlucky day, I said three unpardonable things, creating a wound that did not heal for a whole fortnight. First: I preferred English bacon to French—a dreadful heresy. Secondly: I had not seen a better looking woman in France than the Empress, forgetting she was a Spaniard. And the third unlucky remark referred to the expressive way the French have of shrugging their shoulders and raising their hands as high as the waist, at the same time turning out the palms. This they do when they have no words to express their ideas, or no ideas to express, or when they wish to finish the argument. I went through the motion, remarking that it said a hundred things.

Madame, who, without my observing it, had felt hurt at my admiration of the Empress and English bacon, now thought that I was imitating her when I shrugged my shoulders. She boiled up at once, and bounced out of the kitchen to her seat near the window, where I could see her working furiously at the endless border. Next day, when I hung my key on the board in the bureau, she was so huffy that I told Blot I would dine *en ville* for a short time.

There was a M. de Falaise, or some such name, who, during the Exhibition in 1851, brought a letter of introduction to me in London. I took lodgings for him, and gave him a dinner or two at the club. In return, he hoped I would call upon him if ever I was in Paris; and meeting him a day or two after the row with Madame, he said he would be glad to introduce me to Madame de Falaise, who gave a ball every other Thursday. "Would I go to the next?"

There is no society more expensive than that which one gets for nothing, and hitherto I had avoided going into society on that account. But I thanked him, and went.

The ladies were plain enough, but they were studies, quite pictures in dress. They were friendly at once, and agreeable without formality. Madame de Falaise introduced me to some other French families, and, at the end of the week I had been to four balls and a dinner. Here was success! But could I afford it? I had to buy a new hat with a white lining, for my old Donaldson was too bad for anything, and could not be concealed by even a broad band, worn for an imaginary relative who died about that time. At a ball in Paris a man does not part with his hat till he has asked a lady to dance, and he then places it in her chair, which is thereby kept for her till the dance is over. I was rather ashamed of Donaldson on the first occasion,—he was left alone on a fauteuil of white satin trimmed with pink silk cording—and next morning I gave twenty-two francs for a new hat. Besides this sum, which came, as it were, out of

the capital account, there were three francs every night for gloves; two francs for a cab there, and the same back, not including the *pourboire*—seven francs for the night's amusement!

And then I was led by Louis Velay to visit, by gaslight, several of the low parts of Paris,—a subject to which, not being required in his examination, he had paid great attention. And thus it was that in taking stock of the finances at the end of fourteen days, I found I had spent my whole month's allowance.

I could see Madame Blot was wishing for a reconciliation.

Marguerite asked me one day, on meeting her between the hotel and her mother's shop, "How it was that I had deserted my old friends?" This was rather good, but she had probably been deputed to ask the question; and as she believes everything that is said to her, of course she was satisfied that it was I that was offended. On leaving the key of my room in the bureau next morning, and, as usual of late, merely bowing to Madame without speaking, she made me a gracious bow, and ended by hoping she would soon see me again in my old place in the kitchen. I was not sorry to get back, for genteel society had played harlequin with my finances, and we became better friends than before. I managed her better afterwards. When she was at all touchy, or less amiable than usual, I used to flatter her and her country; French beauty and French bacon—everything at dinner and everything she had on—and I never paid her a compliment too large for her swallow.

I gave up genteel society, and contented myself with *Rampae*, and my friends in the kitchen.

(To be continued.)

PEASANT PROPRIETORSHIP.



[See p. 167.]

I HAVE always believed that the stimulus of proprietorship is the most powerful that can be applied to labour, and was rejoiced to find that the greatest of modern writers upon political economy (Stuart Mill), in one of the most striking and interesting portions of his great work, sums up, on the whole, in its favour.* He says:—"If there is a first principle in intellectual education, it is this—that the discipline which does good to the mind is that in which the mind is active, not that in which it is passive. The secret for developing the faculties is to give them much to do, and much inducement to do it. Few things surpass, in this respect, the occupations and interests created by the ownership and cultivation of land" (vol. i. p. 331).

A Swiss statistical writer speaks of the "almost superhuman industry of peasant proprietors." Arthur Young says, "It is the magic of property which turns sand into gold." Michelet says it acts like a ruling passion upon the peasantry of France, and that in Flanders, the peasant cultivation is affirmed to produce heavier crops in equal circumstances of soil than the best cultivated districts of England and Scotland.

Having dwelt much on this subject, I was a good deal interested in the following simple narra-

tive, which I believe to be strictly founded on fact.

Joseph Austin, a bricklayer, in the neighbourhood of Cambridge, had often looked with a longing eye upon a small piece of land by the roadside—a portion of what is called "The Lord's Waste"; a term which reflects little credit on manorial rights or parochial management. He had never passed this spot without observing upon its capabilities for improvement, and being a house-builder by trade, and something of a castle-builder by nature, he constantly dreamt that he was at work in his favourite spot, with bricks and trowel.

At length, after much brooding upon his scheme, he made an application to the manor-court, and obtained a verbal permission to build there. Two of his neighbours—moved, as he said, by envy—threatened that if he began his house, they would pull it down. Upon this he applied a second time to the court, and obtained a legal permission, with the consent of all the copyholders, paying for the entry of his name on the court-rolls, and sixpence a-year quit-rent. And here we must do our country the justice to observe, that if a man of known industry and good character, like Joseph Austin, applies for an indulgence of this kind there is very little probability of its being refused.

* Chapters vi. and vii. vol. i., Principles of Political Economy.

Austin was at this time forty-two years of age. He had a wife and four children, and his whole stock of worldly wealth amounted to fourteen shillings. But men who deserve friends are seldom long unbefriended, and a master with whom he usually worked at harvest sold him an old cottage for nine guineas, which he undertook to work out.

He had, for some time, been preparing *bats*—a species of brick made of clay and straw well beaten together (18 inches long, 12 wide, and 4 deep), not burnt, but dried in the sun. With these and the materials of the old cottage he went to work.

The *bats* made a better wall than lath and plaster with a coating of clay. Less wood is required, and the house is stronger and warmer, but they must be protected from rain as much as possible, especially towards the foundation.

As he had to live and support his family by his daily labour, this building could only be carried on when his regular day's work was over. He continued it by moonlight, and frequently heard the clock strike twelve before he withdrew from an occupation which engaged all the interest and energy of his character. All this time he had to rise at four o'clock in the morning, to walk four miles to his work, returning the same distance in the evening.

If his constitution had not been unusually strong, his zeal could hardly have carried him through these extraordinary exertions. But he possessed an unweariable frame of body as well as an invincible spirit. When the building was one story high, and the beams were to be placed, the carpenter discovered that the timbers from the old cottage were too short. This was a severe disappointment. Nothing, however, discouraged him. He covered the half-erected walls with a few loads of furze, and immediately began a new building, after the same fashion, only smaller, and connected with the original one. Working at this with as much vigour as perseverance, he succeeded in housing his family in it, with tolerable comfort, at the end of four months from the laying of the foundation.

This great object being accomplished, he went on more leisurely with what remained to be done, spending money upon it as he found he could spare it. After five years he raised the second story; in ten, it was tiled and coated. Although his family had now increased to eight, there was not only house-room for themselves, but another apartment which let for a guinea a-year.

The money his cottage had cost him altogether was about 50*l.*, which sum he saved from his daily labour in the course of ten years. The house and garden occupied about twenty poles of ground, and the garden was in admirable order. Nor did he omit all that might set it off to the best advantage. One of the fences was of sweet-briar and roses, mixed with woodbine, and another of the dwarf plum-tree. Against the back of the house he had planted a vine, a nectarine, and a peach-tree. A single row of quickset, which he cut down six times whilst it was young, fenced it strongly from the road.

Meanwhile his children growing up, and Mrs.

Austin being, like her husband, of an active and enterprising character, it was proposed amongst them that they should endeavour to rent a few acres of land, on which they might be able to keep a cow. The same kind master who had formerly befriended Austin was yet more disposed to do so, after many years' experience of his courageous and persevering industry. He let him have ten and afterwards fourteen acres of pasture-land, on which they kept two cows. The rent was never a shilling in arrear, and the produce enabled them to make a profit and to keep several pigs.

The clergyman of the parish became much interested in this family, and used frequently to draw from Austin the history of his difficulties and his perseverance. He justly regarded himself as having attained a proud position, for he had risen to independence and comfort in the noblest manner. He was a great advocate for small holdings for the poor, and always said it was a never-failing spur to industry and exertion.

"You like to see the neatness of my cottage and garden, sir, which you say differ from the greatest number of those you visit; but why should not such a state of things be more common? As long as every nook of land is let to the great farmers, and nothing left for the poor but to labour hard in their youth, and go on the parish in their old age, I fear it cannot be expected; but I am sure it is the way to better the condition of the peasantry of this country, and to make them contented and attached to the soil where they live, and to the gentry who live near them."

"Yes, but few people manage as well as you do. They may have industry and a desire to help themselves, instead of depending on others; but you could not have effected this, without a good deal of knowledge."

"Well, sir," said Austin, "I won't deny but that it was a great advantage to me, in the building of my house, to have served so long as I did to a good master mason, where I also picked up some little knowledge of joiner's work, and never neglected any opportunity of learning all I could about agricultural matters. In short, I never let a hint go by me, but kept eyes and ears open, and always employed; but any man is able to do the like. One advantage I had, sir; I had kind friends, and nothing encourages poor folks more than finding that the great folks are ready to lend a helping-hand when a man is striving to help himself."

The good effected by this family was far from being limited to the example they presented to the neighbourhood. One instance of it deserves to be mentioned.

It happened one day that Austin had occasion to go to a distant part of the country; in returning home late he lost his way across a lonely tract of moor with which he was unacquainted. Being fatigued with a long day's march, he was glad to discover a cottage in the midst of this wild and desolate scene, although, upon approaching it, he perceived it was little above a hovel; still there were appearances of care and cleanliness

which encouraged him to knock at the door and ask permission to sit down and rest himself for a short time.

The woman who opened the door was a remarkable looking person. Her features were strong but regular, such as in youth had probably been beautiful in no ordinary degree, but care and hard toil seemed to have usurped all of grace except a womanly expression of tenderness in the large sad eyes. She received Austin doubtfully, but gave him leave to enter, and he observed that the inside of this uninviting hovel was far from being neglected or comfortless. There were even traces of an endeavour after cheerfulness and decoration. There were flowers in bright scarlet flower-pots in the window, looking well-tended; coloured prints on the white-washed walls, tied up with bright coloured scraps of ribbon; but on the bed lay a piteous object—an idiot-child of about eight or ten years of age, so entirely devoid of sense as to be almost without the power of motion, yet beautifully neat, clean, and carefully dressed. Austin endeavoured to enter into conversation with the mother, whose quaint looks and neglected attire contrasted painfully with that of her idiot-child. He made some remark upon the neatness of the house, and having been gifted by nature with one of those frank and kindly manners which it is next to impossible to withstand, the poor woman's reserve gradually melted under its influence, and she told him somewhat of her story.

She said she had been deserted by her husband about ten years ago; he had feared to face the poverty that was threatening him, after failing in a small business with which they had begun their married life, and had left her to struggle with penury alone. She had been confined of her poor idiot-child, and for some time had subsisted upon charity; but this existence was repugnant to her spirit, and as her calamity became more apparent with the infant's growth, she had shunned the intercourse of her neighbours, and had resolved to retire to some solitary spot where she might work for her bread and that of her boy.

As is always the case with natural ties, he had become dearer to her in proportion to his helplessness, and she determined to live and to employ her health, strength, and time for him. She wandered to a distance from her native village, and got permission from a humane farmer to occupy a hovel on one of the sheep-walks of his farm, which had been considered in too hopeless a state of decay to be inhabited by the shepherd. The shepherd, however, proved a kind friend to her. (The poor help one another to a degree which is often a reproach to their wealthier brethren.) She established herself, with his assistance, in the little cottage; worked out her rent—1*l.* a-year—and earned her child's food and clothing by labouring on the farmer's land at picking stones or weeds. She was allowed to bring her helpless child with her; and carefully wrapping him up and placing him on a bed of straw in some out-house, she would devote her dinner-hour to feeding and attending upon him, forgetting her own hunger and weariness in the delight of being able to minister to his.

She said, with the tears in her dark eyes, that he was the only thing she lived for, and the delight of her lonely life—for him she had ornamented the walls and procured the flowers, because the gay colours seemed to attract the poor boy's vacant gaze. Austin asked if the neighbours were kind to her. She answered that she saw no one but the shepherd, who had assisted her to establish herself. She did not want neighbours. She had her boy to occupy her, and she earned enough to support him. What more did she need? Nobody could feel for her boy but herself—most people would be revolted by the sight of him. She did not care to see any one. Hitherto she had done well, but trouble was now threatening her. After this week her employer was to leave the farm, and as no one else knew her, she was at a loss how she could get employment. Except the shepherd, most people shunned her—it was no wonder. She had first shunned them. Still she must think of something. Her boy must not starve, even if she were reduced to beg his bread.

There was something heroic about this woman, and her devoted love for her helpless child, that touched a cord in Austin's heart. He was a thoroughly religious man, and his mind reverted habitually, whether in sorrow or in joy, to the source of all comfort and all hope. He touched upon that sacred subject to her, but was disappointed to find not the slightest response. It appeared either as if her religious feelings had become confused and indistinct from want of cultivation and communication, or else (and which he thought more probable) that misfortune and calamity had had a deadening influence, and had darkened her sense of dependence upon a Father who invites us to cast our cares upon Him.

After some conversation with her, it suddenly occurred to this kind-hearted man that, poor as he was, he might benefit this isolated being. Communication with his wife and children he felt certain would prove beneficial to a character soured by penury and solitude, and for her labour he could afford a fair remuneration. He therefore proposed to her to work upon his land, assist his wife with the cows and with the domestic drudgery, and offered her the same wages she had received from the farmer. She joyfully accepted his proposal, and undertook to be at her work by eight o'clock every morning, provided she might bring her child with her.

This was willingly granted, and her work allotted, which she faithfully and diligently performed, attending with the utmost punctuality. The hour's rest in the middle of the day was devoted to the idiot child, who was comfortably lodged on a bed of hay in the cow-shed. She became a great favourite with Mrs. Austin and the children, and her labour was fully worth the humble wages she earned.

Nothing could be happier and more prosperous than this little colony. The children were sent for education to the village-school, and as they grew older they assisted in the little farm. Upon the produce of this farm they almost entirely subsisted, and the feeling of proprietorship added a zeal to their efforts which tells in manual labour

after a fashion, which no other motive is ever found to supply.

But it pleased the Almighty that this remarkable example of honest, hard-working perseverance, hitherto blessed and stimulated by success, should be a further example of humility under affliction. "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Thus may many of us say, to whom calamity comes as a stranger, and as a phantom, to scare away the peaceful and even tenour of an innocent life!

The first blow fell upon the poor deserted wife. Her child sickened and died, and it would perhaps be impossible to form any conception of her misery, on the part of those who have never known what it is to live in another's life, and that life one that depends on our exertions. A fresh creation, as it were, every day drawing its daily life from the fountain of our affection and devotion.

As might be expected, she sorrowed as one that had no hope. She refused employment; she left not her home; she saw no one. Unfortunately, Mrs. Austin's confinement had recently taken place, and she had been unable to look after her; but feeling now sufficiently strong to go to her cottage, on a bright September morning she set forth with a little basket of provisions for the poor mourner, little dreaming that the happy home she left was, ere night, to be turned into the house of desolation and woe.

On Mrs. Austin's reaching the lonely cottage, she observed its unusually bleak and deserted appearance. Not a footstep was to be seen near the door; the path was almost obliterated; a miserable hovel it had been at the best, but now indeed it was marked as the abode of wretchedness itself. The cracked mud wall was not more than four feet in height, and the roof had no other covering than the damp green moss, under which the thatch had rotted away. The moor sheep, lying under the black stones which everywhere appeared amid the surrounding heath and peat, seemed better housed and sheltered than the inmate of this abode of misery. The bed was in disorder, and the window, which was broken and stopped up with weeds, was already obscured with dirt and cobwebs. The prints had mildewed on the walls; the flower-pots were still in their places; but the plants were dead, and drops of damp had collected on their decayed leaves.

The poor woman—sullen in her woe,—was sitting erect on the bed with folded arms, and a countenance that afforded no encouragement to kindness. From her neighbours she had received no aid or consolation, for they had begun to abuse and hate her as a witch; and the overseers, with whom she was compelled to have intercourse had brought no unusual degree of feeling and charity to the execution of their office. But nothing could repel the Christian benevolence of Mrs. Austin; she suggested schemes of employment; she made offers of assistance; she pressed upon her the duty of employment, the consolations of religion.

"God," she said, "will give you strength to go on; do but make a beginning. Do not give yourself up to this sad, stern way of taking your grief. It looks like impatience."

"And you would be impatient, too!" she re-

torted. "You never lost a living soul you loved; but what if you were to lose *all* you loved! *All* at once! No—no! I thank you, mistress! but leave me to my grief. Nobody has felt grief like mine!"

Mrs. Austin was compelled at length, most unwillingly, to abandon all hope of doing any good. She made one more effort to turn the poor woman's heart towards the only source of consolation, but her sun was darkened. She could only look upon it as the source of sorrow. Her notions of religion were too indistinct to afford her any comfort; they had never been cultivated, and the fruit was therefore not to be found when it was wanted. Nor was there any of that pride which enables so many to bear up against affliction. It was vehement grief, acting upon a strong mind, and strong frame, unmixed—unsophisticated—unalleviated; and for want of the most precious of all the Almighty's gifts to man—unalleviable.

But now the consoler was to need consolation. Mrs. Austin returned late to her home to find it in a state of affliction that baffles description. As the tidings burst upon her amid the sobs and groans of her children, that their father's corpse lay in the adjoining room, she sank down senseless. He had been busied about some repairs which were required in the roof. The ladder on which he stood had slipped, and being a heavy man, his fall had been violent. Some sharp stones lay below, and one moment had ended his useful and energetic life.

Crushed and stunned by her grief, in the first instance, Mrs. Austin's character was not one in which exertion would fail, whilst she had the power to serve God and her fellow-creatures. Her children rallied round her, giving and finding strength, and in their sympathy and affection she found her best earthly consolation. The eldest son, though still under fourteen years of age, was a lad of sense and conduct, and had inherited his father's courage and energy. He redoubled his activity and punctuality. His sisters and younger brother seconded his exertions, and after the lapse of some months the routine of the family life was resumed.

Mrs. Austin, however, could not but feel the utmost anxiety respecting their future fate—and the relieving officers made their appearance one day in her cottage and proceeded with more of kindness and consideration than is usual in such cases, to talk over the possibility of maintenance which her circumstances afforded. They proposed to take her five youngest children into the house. It may be difficult to say what system of affording relief to the poor is to be preferred; but this may be affirmed without hesitation, that whatever system tends to weaken the domestic affections by separating parents from children, is radically bad. When this was proposed to the poor widow, she answered in great agitation that she would rather die in working to maintain her children, than part with any of them. If necessary, she would accompany them all into the workhouse; and there labour with them, but never should they be divided except it were the will of God. Still, she added, if the landlord would continue her in "the farm," she would undertake to bring up all her ten

children without any help at all from the parish. This noble spirited woman had, fortunately, a benevolent landlord to deal with. He told her she should continue his tenant and hold the land, rent free for the first year. At the same time he gave private directions to his receiver, not to call upon her afterwards, thinking that even with that indulgence it would be a difficult undertaking to bring up so large a family. But this further liberality was unnecessary. By her high-principled exertions she set the example to her children of patient and unremitting toil, and she had in return from them every assistance which their age and strength enabled them to render.

One evening it happened that the lonely woman who had formerly been their only labourer, found her way to their yet cheerful and happy home. The day's labour was over, and they had gathered round the tea-table. Their mother was the only privileged one who was allowed the luxury of tea; the rest having respectable bowls of milk and bread. Toil and sorrow had already added many furrows to Mrs. Austin's open and honest brow, but there was a calmness and repose upon it which struck the other, who had never known a moment's rest since *her* sorrow, nor ever sought to check its selfish indulgence. She had made it her thought by day and her dream by night; and from suffering her mind to dwell on her loss incessantly, she had nearly brought herself to a state of phrenzy. Her wild eye was fixed upon Mrs. Austin, who sat surrounded by her children, the most admirable spectacle that humanity can afford.

It would require the pen of Sir Walter Scott to draw the gradual moral influence which this living picture of piety, patience, and fortitude exercised over the diseased mind of the sufferer, whose calamity, though immeasurably the least, was immeasurably the most to be pitied. Her admiration for them all knew no bounds. She entreated to be allowed to work with them, for them; to be admitted, on any terms, into so blessed a community. She promised that her labour should prevent her being a burden to them; and that Mrs. Austin would find she was of use to the younger part of her family, as well as in the most humble offices.

Mrs. Austin felt that even were it injurious to her interests, she could not as a Christian reject the prayer of the poor woman; and that her continuing amongst them afforded the only chance of arousing her from the melancholy state into which she had fallen. It is needless to add that the result was entirely successful, and that she gradually assimilated herself to the character of those she so deeply revered and loved. Mrs. Austin had the satisfaction of finding that her Christian act proved beneficial, as a temporal measure, for the poor dependant was of the greatest service to them in many ways; and that the introduction into the establishment of a second person of mature age was a material convenience.

The rent was forthcoming with perfect regularity after the year of grace. They held the land till eight of the ten children were placed in service; and Mrs. Austin then resigned it to take the employment of a nurse, which enabled her to

provide for the remaining two during the short time they required support; and this she found a more suitable employment for her declining years. Had the five children been sent to the Union, they would have cost the parish hardly less than 70*l.* a year; and the widow, had she been deprived of the land, would have been compelled, with the remaining five, to have had recourse also to parochial relief.

I must not forget to add, that the devoted servant continued her labours until they were transferred to a small farmer who had married one of Mrs. Austin's daughters; and that, treated with care and kindness, she died at an advanced age, having nursed her young mistress's children, and been the delight and comfort of many a youthful and merry heart.

H. E.

pump, the family at home never have enough for all purposes of cleanliness, and the fatigue of the fetching and carrying is out of all proportion to the supply obtained.

Mr. Jackson says, however, that he could afford both kinds of accommodation if a row of half-a-dozen dwellings was in question. A well and pump for common use would, in that case, be provided in the rear. HARRIET MARTINEAU.

BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION.

"YES, sir, I do object to smoking," said the pudsy little man; "and so the sooner you and your friend there throw away those filthy cigars, the better."

Charlie Davis and I had taken some pains to secure a carriage to ourselves, and had tipped the guard half-a-crown not to allow us to be disturbed; when, just at the last moment, as we had made ourselves comfortable, and settled down for a quiet smoke all the way to Z—, in pops this puffy old fellow, with his Counterblast against tobacco, delivered in the offensive form above set forth.

The appearance of our persecutor was "podgy"—emphatically "podgy." He had no neck; his waist was the broadest portion of his person; he stood five feet five in his square-toed boots. His hair was aggressive and defiant; his face very red; his eyes very black and bright; the brim of his hat curled up in an insulting manner; and such was the supernatural stiffness and ferocity of his shirt collars, that I wondered they did not slice his ears off each time he moved his head.

Away went the train: Charlie and I put out our weeds, and resigned ourselves to our fate; whilst our companion sate bolt upright, glaring savagely out of the window at nothing at all.

"Wonderful thing steam, sir!" said Charlie, with a wink at me. He was a bit of a wag was Charlie, in his way, and wanted to draw out the "old bird," as he subsequently designated our fellow-traveller.

"Thank you, sir, for the information!" replied the old gentleman, suddenly throwing his body forward, and staring Charlie full in the face: "I'll take a note of it. And in return, allow me to give *you* a piece of news—Queen Anne's dead."

Charlie collapsed.

"Would you like to see the paper, sir?" said I, perceiving that our companion was not to be chaffed, and offering him my "Times," deferentially.

"No, sir!" was his reply, turning round so sharply upon me, that I winced, half expecting a blow. "I read everything worth reading in the 'Times' four hours ago—before you were out of your bed, I'll be sworn—it took me just ten minutes."

Having given utterance to this polite speech, he sate bolt upright again, and glared as before.

Giving up the attempt to engage him in conversation as useless, Charlie and I moved to the other end of the carriage, and read our newspapers in silence.

"By Jove, Charlie!" said I, after a while, "just read the evidence given yesterday before the Wakefield Election Commission—there's bribery and corruption for you."

"Bribery and corruption!" exclaimed the old gentleman, in a tone compared with which his former observations were calm and courteous: "don't talk to me about bribery and corruption!"

"Excuse me, sir, I did not talk to *you* at all," was my rejoinder. I intended this withering sarcasm should crush the old fellow, but it didn't.

"Bah!" he exclaimed, excitedly, not heeding me. "Bribery and corruption, indeed! Do you call the miserable huxtering for votes you are reading about there, bribery and corruption? Boys shouldn't talk about what they don't understand."

I was about to make some angry reply to this fresh piece of impertinence, when Charlie gave me an admonitory kick on the shin. He saw that by accident we had mounted the old boy on his hobby; and that, with a little tact, he might be made to perform a rapid piece of horsemanship upon it for our especial amusement. Charlie was right.

"I perfectly agree with you, sir," he said, looking as grave as a judge: "such trumpery proceedings do not deserve those good old titles, 'bribery and corruption.'"

The old gentleman was delighted. "Permit me to shake you by the hand, sir," he cried; "allow me to make your acquaintance: my name is Minkinshaw."

"What *the* Minkinshaw?" asked Charlie, in a mysterious tone. (The rogue had never heard the name before in the whole course of his life.)

Our eccentric companion smiled blandly. "You have read my pamphlet upon the necessity of re-establishing rotten boroughs, as a means of supplying statesmen and orators for Parliament, then?" he whispered in his ear.

"Admirable!" Charlie replied, throwing up his head, and frowning, as in duty bound, when speaking of so recondite a work—"admirable!"

"We shall never be able to govern the country without them."

"Never!"

"Never, by Jove! never!"

"And so little is known about them by the present generation!" said Charlie, with a sigh.

"They are as ignorant as pigs upon the subject," replied Mr. Minkinshaw, indignantly. "They indulge in some parrot's talk about Gatton and Old Sarum, just as if those were the only rotten boroughs! Who knows now of Corfe Castle, a borough in the Isle of Purbeck, which consisted of twelve thatched cottages, eight of which belonged to one landlord: of Northallerton, which returned two members to Parliament, to represent the chimneys of Lord Harewood's cow-houses, which were once on a time what the lawyers call 'burgage tenures': or of Midhurst, which had not house nor inhabitant, but one hundred and eighteen stones, marking where so many of such tenures had stood: or of Launceston, in Cornwall, where the Corporation, consisting of fifteen members under the thumb of the Duke of Northumberland, would have returned his black

footman, had he given them the order: or of Wilton, in Wiltshire, which would have done the same for another noble lord: or of Lymington, in Hampshire, the absolute property of one Sir H. B. Neale at the time of the passing of the Reform Bill: or of the old boroughs of Liskeard, Lyme Regis, Droithwich, Thirsk, New Ross, Calne, Portarlington, and others, which did as they were told by their owners, and asked no questions? When I was a boy, sir, if a person wanted to get into Parliament himself, or to send his son or brother-in-law there, he did not go chaffering and pettyfogging amongst a set of butchers and bakers and candlestick-makers for their votes; no! he bought them and their borough up bodily, and was returned respectably, like a gentleman."

"What was a 'burgage tenure,' Mr. Minkinshaw?" I asked.

"A 'burgage tenure' was—ahem! a 'bur-gage tenure' means a tenure that is—well! I don't exactly know what it means; and if I did, it would take too much time to tell you," replied Mr. Minkinshaw, rubbing his red double chin thoughtfully. "A barrister friend of mine once tried to tell me, but, confound him! he was so prosy, I could not make him out. All I know is, that they were certain plots of land, on which there was, or had been, some building, and whoever was the tenant of one of them, had a vote. So you see, when a nobleman had a 'burgage tenure' borough—like Old Sarum, for example, where the right of voting was in respect of the foundations of a ruined wall—he kept these tenures in his own hands, and just before the election conveyed them to his friends, or servants, who of course returned him to Parliament as their representative, and when the election was over gave back the deeds into his hands. It never would have done for him to have parted with them out and out, running the risk of the tenants being bought up by some one else and turning upon him. No! no!"

"In many of the boroughs," I observed, "the franchise was held by the freeholders."

"Lor' bless you," replied Mr. Minkinshaw, "that made no difference. Now I'll tell you what happened in the village where I was born—Haselmere, in Surrey, I mean. This was, down to the year 1832, a pocket-borough of the Earls of Lonsdale. There were about sixty-seven freeholds in it altogether; forty of them belonging to the Earl, twenty to Lord Gwydir, and the remainder to independent persons. Did the Earl trust his freeholds to the Haselmere people? Not he. He knew a trick worth two of that. Seats in Parliament were worth something in those days, I can tell you. A nobleman who could command the votes of half-a-dozen members, had not to ask the minister twice for a rich sinecure for his younger son, or a bishoprick for his daughter's husband. No! Seats in Parliament were worth having, and worth keeping: so he sent for forty labourers from his collieries in the north, built cottages for them, and allowed each man half-a-guinea a week, besides what he could earn, for being ready to vote for him, and they *did* vote for him, returning his nominee in the general elections of 1780, 1784, 1790, 1796. Well, the old Earl died in

1802, and his successor, thinking that the seat was quite safe, and not caring to be at the expense of keeping the forty freeholders any longer, sent them about their business; the consequence of which was, that at the general election in 1812, which came somewhat suddenly upon the country, he found himself without a single qualified elector in the borough! Lord Gwydir was no better off, and there were two opposition candidates in the field! Here was a pretty fix to be in!"

"Well," said I, "The seven independent free-men, I suppose, returned the popular candidates?"

Minkinshaw contemplated me with an air of lofty compassion. He looked me down my forehead, nose, and chin—down the line of my shirt-studs, and waistcoat buttons—down the seams of my trowsers, till he came to my boots—and then he looked me back again, over the same route, up to my hair, when, throwing up his red double chin in silent scorn of my ignorance and presumption, he proceeded with his narration to Charlie, ignoring my existence and observations altogether.

"Well, sir, the day of election came. The returning officer was the bailiff appointed by the Earl of Lonsdale. He was told to adjourn the poll to the following morning, and he did so. In the meantime we got together all the attorneys' clerks that were to be had within fifty miles, and set them at work to draw up conveyances of my lord's freeholds. By polling-time the next day, fourteen deeds were engrossed, signed, sealed, and delivered, and an equal number of bran-new electors voted for Charles Young and Robert Ward, Esquires, his lordship's nominees, and, having so done, returned the deeds, like free and independent electors and good tenants. The gentlemen I have named were elected, and Admiral Greaves and his son were sent about their business!"

Now, methought, I have you on the hip, Mr. Minkinshaw. "I think you said this took place in the year 1812?" I inquired.

"Yes, sir; I am always exact as to dates."

"No doubt, then," I replied, "you will remember that the Act forbidding splitting of votes, and requiring six months' residence in a borough before a vote could be gained, was in force at that time?"

"Of course it was. What then?" demanded the Minkinshaw, fiercely.

"According to your own showing, all the freeholds belonged to Lord Lonsdale, immediately before the election, and also immediately afterwards. Admiral Greaves should have petitioned against the return."

"He did petition, and was beaten."

"Then," I urged, somewhat nettled, "you have not acquainted us with all the circumstances of the case. If he proved what you have stated he *must* have succeeded!"

"If he proved it—ay! It was all as notorious as noon-day; but he couldn't prove it with legal evidence. First of all, he called Lord Lonsdale's steward as a witness that all the freeholds belonged to his master; but the steward was objected to being a confidential agent, and was not allowed to

give evidence. Then the petitioner tried to examine my lord's rent-collector, to prove that the *freeholders* (?) had paid rent before and after the election; but his evidence was held to be inadmissible, for the same reason. No man can be called upon to disqualify his own vote, therefore none of the freeholders who voted could be witnesses. Mr. Disney was counsel for the petitioners, and jawed away sixteen to the dozen, I can tell you, but it was of no use. The committee rejected his witnesses, and the petition was dismissed."

Mr. Minkinshaw, whose gestures throughout were, to say the least of them, lively, emphasised this triumph of corruption with a wave of his arm that sent my hat flying in Charlie's face.

"What do you call splitting votes?" asked Charlie, dabbing his handkerchief on his excoriated nose.

"When the owner of a freehold gave a portion of it to some one, so as to enable him to vote," replied Minkinshaw. "In a famous contest at Weymouth, not so many years ago, two hundred freeholds were split into ten thousand. Fellows were brought there on purpose to vote, and so fine was the splitting, that some of them voted in respect of the thirteen hundred and sixtieth part of a *sixpenny freehold*."

"In many counties and boroughs though," added I, "all those who paid scot and lot—that means rates and taxes, Charlie—were electors."

You see, I did not want to let my friend think that old Minkinshaw monopolised all the information upon the subject in discussion.

"Yes! you are right—for once!" remarked Mr. Minkinshaw, with insolent condescension. "And now I'll tell you a little history about these sort of voters. In the borough of Seaford, the franchise belonged to all inhabitant housekeepers paying scot and lot. The Duke of Richmond had chalk-pits near at hand, and he brought twenty-seven of his labourers into the borough as taxpayers, so as to make them electors. Some of them were rated as occupying houses really tenanted by widows, or revenue officers, who could not vote. One lived under a boat turned upside down; another was taxed in respect of a stable; and a third of a cottage that had been pulled down and never rebuilt. Of course, the Duke paid the rates. Well! the general election of 1790 came on eighteen days before these voters had resided there six months. Here was a fix again! But the returning officer, who was a dependent of the Duke's, put off the poll till the eighth day after the proclamation, as he was entitled to do, and then the ministerial candidates—nominees of his Grace—made long speeches against the admissibility of every vote that was tendered against them—there were no registers of votes in those days—and got the returning officer to administer to each elector the six oaths of allegiance, abjuration, supremacy, declaration of test, residence, and bribery. Spinning it out in this way, it took one whole day to poll four votes. Thus the election was tided over the remaining eight days, and then, their term of residence being completed, the chalk-diggers were marched up in a body, their votes given and accepted, and the poll was closed—smack! That was something

like CORRUPTION, sir! There is something great about a 'dodge' of that sort. It is true that the House of Commons declared the election void: but what of that? The charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava was not successful, sir; but it was dashing, grand, heroic—something to talk about—and so was my Lord Duke's chalk-diggers' dodge!"

Saying which, Mr. Minkinshaw brought down his brass-ferruled umbrella perpendicularly upon my instep, inflicting thereupon an injury, the mark of which I shall carry with me to my grave. I writhed in agony, and the exclamation "Infernal!" rose unbidden to my lips.

"Bah!" cried the Minkinshaw, still purple with excitement, "that's nothing!"

"Really, sir, you must allow me to be the best judge of my own feelings," said I, angrily. "You have hurt me severely."

"Pooh! pooh! pooh!" rejoined my tormentor.

"I was not talking of your foot. Why, the deuce, did you stick it in the way of my umbrella?" Then, turning to my friend, he continued, "I repeat that what I have just told you is nothing to what the returning officers of pocket-boroughs did to put down opposition. They were usually the stewards or attorneys of the patron, and acted as they pleased. Now, at Beeralston, in Cornwall, the election used to be held without any electors being present! In the year 1816 there were but two qualified voters in the borough, and these determined to oppose the candidate of the Earl of Beverley, its proprietor. The portreeve, who was returning officer, but had no vote, set out from Plymouth, where he lived, with an attorney's clerk, and met the voters under a great tree, where the election had been usually held. He began to read the Acts of Parliament, which at that time it was the custom to read, and one of the voters handed him a card, on which was written the names of the candidates he wished to propose. The clerk told him he was too soon. Before the reading was ended, the other voter tendered another card, when he was informed that he was too late. Then away went the portreeve and his clerk to a neighbouring public-house and cooked up a return of the Earl's nominees, which was not signed by a single elector!"

"But were the returning officers never called over the coals for such work as this?" inquired Charlie.

"Sometimes they were," replied the Minkinshaw. "In 1623, the Mayor of Winchelsea, having been convicted of threatening some of the voters, and improperly excluding others from the poll, was sentenced by the House of Commons to be committed to prison, and afterwards to make submission on his knees at the bar of the House, and also in his native town before the jurats and freemen. In 1702, another mayor of the same place received the same punishment, in spite of the utmost efforts of the Government—whose tool he was—to save him. You see they had not learnt to manage these little affairs discreetly in those rough times. Later on, they contrived better. A Mr. Nesbitt was once the principal landowner in the borough just mentioned, and upon one occasion—when opposed by a nominee of the Earl

of Egremont, in the Tory interest—the town-clerk, who was the Treasury agent, pawned the charters and all the records of the corporation to raise funds to carry on the campaign (in plain English, to bribe the freeholders), and afterwards the Treasury redeemed the pledge. They could not do such a thing now-a-days,” added our companion, with a sigh, “not even to turn out a —; Mr. Williams would be down upon them, for the sum was too large to be stuck into the miscellaneous expenses. Well, Mr. Nesbitt’s son afterwards sold the borough, for 15,000*l.*, to the Earl of Darlington and Mr. Barwell, the nabob and millionaire, who, by the way, lived to want half-a-crown, and whose four daughters received 80,000*l.* a-piece after his death, when his claim against Government was paid. Every freeman of Winchilsea was paid 100*l.* for his vote.”

“That was something like ‘bribery,’” replied Charlie. “Why, 5*l.*, in these degenerate days, is almost as much as a man can get. Now, what is the largest sum you ever heard of, as having been given for a single vote, Mr. Minkinshaw?”

“Well!” replied he, solemnly; “this I *know*—an elector of Scarborough received 1000*l.* for his vote. There were only forty-four electors in all; forty-two of them had polled—the numbers were equal, and the forty-third man was at sea, but the voter I speak of did not know it. He’d have asked 5000*l.* if he had, and, by Jove, sir!” exclaimed the old gentleman, this time venting his superfluous energies upon his own thigh, “he’d have got it!”

“The elections that were contested must have cost something, if people were bribed at that rate,” said Charlie, who had taken upon himself the office of ring-master to Mr. Minkinshaw and his hobby.

The Performer shook his head severely, and then winked. He next took a long breath, and spoke as follows:

“The election for the county of York, in 1807, lasted fifteen days, and cost the three candidates *half a million of money!* The expenses of Mr. Wilberforce, the philanthropist, who stood at the head of the poll, were defrayed by public subscription, and those of Lord Milton (afterwards Earl Fitzwilliam), created an annual charge of 17,000*l.* on his estate. The unsuccessful candidate, the Hon. H. Lascelles, a son of the Earl of Harewood, and a Tory, spent even more than that. Never was there so vigorously contested an election, either before or since. The roads in all directions were crowded each day with every description of machine that could go on wheels, from my lady’s barouche down to the tanner’s tax-cart,—some with eight horses to them, taking voters up to the poll. You may judge how hard the work must have been, when I tell you, that upwards of 23,000 votes were recorded, and that a hundred and twenty horses were found dead upon the roads during the polling! Two thousand electors a-day came into York City, and provisions, that would have lasted its inhabitants for twelve months, were consumed in a fortnight! Another famous election was that of Shrewsbury, in the year 1797. It was contested between the late Lord Berwick, and Sir Richard Hill, of

Hawkestone,—their brothers being the candidates. It cost them more than *one hundred thousand pounds*—all spent in bribery and corruption of one kind or another.

“You think, I dare say,” continued Mr. Minkinshaw, addressing Charlie, “that the proceedings of the fellows your friend there (contemptuously indicating me) was reading about just now, are new election dodges. Lord bless your innocence! they are as old as the hills. We’ve had ‘Pedlars,’ and ‘Punches,’ and ‘Men in the Moon,’ dropping down into a county or borough, with their pack filled with bank notes for circulation amongst the electors, at any general election since the year 1724, when the first Parliament of King George the Second was elected. ‘Punch’ was old in 1774, when an alderman of Shaftesbury, dressed up in a mask and hump, and hidden in a dark room, bribed the electors with twenty guineas a man, paying the money through a hole in the door. Some blundering of outsiders led to an election petition, and in consequence of the disclosures that were made, Mr. Mortimer, the unsuccessful candidate, brought actions against a Mr. Sykes—a supporter of his opponent—for twenty-six distinct acts of bribery, committed previously to the election. The causes were tried at the assizes at Dorchester, on the 27th of July, 1776, before Sir James Eyre, when the plaintiff obtained a verdict for twenty-two penalties, amounting altogether to *eleven thousand pounds!*”

“That was paying for his whistle,” said Charlie.

“Served him right, for acting so clumsily,” replied Minkinshaw. “Millions of money have been spent in bribery and corruption, and who can say—except those whose interest it is to keep the secret—how it went, or to whom? I tell you, men were bought and sold, like sheep, in the pocket-boroughs, and sold themselves to the highest bidder in the counties and boroughs that were open to the contests. A drunken tinker might have ridden to the poll in the carriage of a Duchess, if the time were short and the numbers equal. During the polling for some northern county,—I forget exactly which now,—one of the candidates found out that two of the freeholders were living away in Cornwall. He sent for them, and they were brought in two post-chaises (each would have his own), a distance of two hundred and ninety miles, at an expense of above a hundred pounds, for they lived like fighting-cocks on the road. They were paid a hundred and fifty each besides, for coming; but the best of the joke was, that when they arrived they were so drunk that they both voted against the very man who had brought them!”

“That was a sell!” exclaimed Charlie. “You told us just now, that the Government of the day redeemed the archives of Winchilsea. Was public money often expended in bribery for the Ministerial candidate?”

“Not often in the present century, but previous—”

The train began to stop.

“*Bletchley! Change here for the Bedford Line,*” shouted the porters. Our “podgy” friend started to his feet, caught up his coats and hat-box, and

dived down to the platform, knocking over a policeman, and nearly annihilating a fat lap-dog led by a very tall lady, who poked the Minkinshaw with her parasol, angrily called him a wretch, and demanded to know if he intended to be her death. From the crest-fallen manner in which my tormentor permitted himself to be captured and led away by that gaunt un-crinolined lady, I concluded that she was his wife, and I feel certain that I am avenged.

"An amusing old party," said Charlie, lighting his cigar. "One may give a guess now why he interdicted smoking. Had his coat borne presumptive evidence of his having indulged in the

noxious weed when he encountered the strong-minded lady—that would have been a state of things—eh? Poor old Minkinshaw! No 'bribery' would have mollified her."

"Talking of 'bribery,'" said I, musingly, "I should not wonder if, when we are old fogies, we shall be able to tell of things that will count just as outrageous to the rising generation as Old Minkinshaw's tales of bye-gone 'Bribery and Corruption, do to us now.'"

"I wonder if we shall ever meet him again?" replied Charlie.

Time will show.

ALBANY FONBLANQUE, JUN.

DIVORCE A VINCULO; OR, THE TERRORS OF SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL.



YOUNG gentleman who had spent his early life in those pleasant regions which lie immediately around the Primate's residence in Lambeth, and at the Surrey end of Westminster Bridge, was asked who, in his opinion, was the most powerful man in the world? He replied, without a moment's hesitation, "Mr. Norton, the Lambeth Beak." From his own point of view, the boy was perfectly in the right. The worthy magistrate named was the Nemesis of his little world—omnipresent—omniscient—omnipotent.

I am inclined, however, to think that had this smutty young neophyte of civilisation enjoyed wider opportunities of observation; could he have enlarged the sphere of his mental vision so as to take in the territory and population comprised within the limits of the British empire—Scotland and Ireland excepted—he would have reconsidered his cruder and earlier decision. It may be that he

would finally have agreed with me that, powerful and dreadful as Mr. Norton undoubtedly is, if we wish to arrive at a notion of incarnate omnipotence—always within the limits named—SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL is the man.

What can QUEEN VICTORIA—God bless her!—do to me, or for me, either of good or harm? I am not a courtier, nor in the way of preferment. What do I care for Lord Chancellor Campbell? I feel humbly, but deeply and unfeignedly, grateful to the All-wise Disposer of events that I have not, nor am I likely to have, one shilling in the world over which the gentlemen of the Chancery Bar can wrangle, and charge me eighteenpence for talking about it. The fifteen judges of the land—with the exception of those two sly Puisnes who, from time to time, clutch hold of awful Sir Cresswell's mantle, and shine for an hour or two by borrowed light—are to me but as fifteen cabbages—or, let me rather say, regard being had to their

head-dress—fifteen goodly cauliflowers. I am not a murderer, nor a burglar, nor a joint-stock-bank director, nor a family solicitor. As they pass me by in full assize majesty with their attendant javelin-men, I can put my hands in my pockets and hum, under their very parchment noses—

"Shepherds, tell me, have you seen
My Flora pass this way?"

But, even as I say the word, my mind misgives me: not, as I before stated, that I care one button about their Nisi Prius trumpery—but, Flora dear! even as I pronounce thy beloved name, and my mind goes pleasantly lounging amongst pink bonnets of the sweetest kind—

Twickenham eyots—shadow dances contemplated from easy stalls with abundant leg-room—snug little suppers in perspective—jaunts in Helvetia, where I propose to myself to show you (I mean *thee*!) snowy mountains for the first time—I mark two little clouds rising in the far west, each no bigger than a man's hand, but, gracious powers! they assume the form of two capital letters—

C C

Oh! Flora, Flora! will you ever tell Sir Cresswell about my unguarded observations when that last pair of boots "wouldn't go" into the carpet-bag, despite of my best and continuous exertions? And that other time at Crewe, when the railway porter put our "things"—be just, it was not I who gave the order!—into the train for Liverpool, and when we arrived at Windermere, I admit, I said something beginning with a big D? Surely you would never have the heart, Flo, under any circumstances, to mention that to Sir Cresswell? Besides, you little witch! (the term "witch" is not abusive: "witch" means "fairy," and "fairy" means—can't you guess?) you know you condoned—yes; condoned—the offence, if offence there were, the same evening under the mountain ash in front of the Lowood Hotel, when the sun was going down over Coniston Old Man, and the bright golden lake lay at thy tiny feet like Beauty's mirror—and all that sort of thing. If ever you tell about the big D, Flo, it will become my friend Dr. Pink's painful duty to cross-examine you upon the results which grew out of the incident, and we'll see with whom Sir Cresswell will side when he knows the truth—and he always knows the truth about young ladies—that's the awful part of the business. Did you ever hear what happened the other day when he caught Mrs. Mulock—you know Henrietta Prim that was—out in a fib about the crochet? She has not been heard of since: but there was a painful rumour about the clubs, last week, that the body of a young female had been washed ashore at Erith, in a sack, with the device upon it—

C ^ C

There may be nothing in the report, but it is as well to be careful.

Well, then, as I said above, the magnates of this world and their huge proceedings, with one terrible exception, are nothing to me. I can't even say that I seriously care about the eloquent Chancellor of the Exchequer and his last addition to the Income Tax. As far as I am concerned personally, one afternoon's work will set that to rights; and I can take the value out in after-dinner prose at any time. LOUIS NAPOLEON is not likely to get to Brompton in my day; and if the British Parliament will only take a little more care about the purity of the Serpentine, as a citizen I am satisfied. The exception is Sir Cresswell Cresswell. I confess I stand in awe of that man—if, indeed, he is a man—upon which point I entertain some doubts. Is it not written, "Those who have been joined in a very solemn way, let no man put asunder!" But Sir Cresswell Cresswell does put them asunder, as easily as he would two pads of butter. Therefore—the inference is clear.

Talk of the House of Commons as a powerful body, what do they represent but a parcel of miserable county voters and 10% freeholders? but Sir Cresswell Cresswell represents 5,000,000 of English wives. Five millions of Mrs. Caudles, all in one, are sitting there in that dreadful Divorce Court. Lieutenant-General Sir Cresswell Cresswell commands an army, I say, of five millions of able-bodied matrons. He is in military possession of the country: he has billeted his followers in two out of every three houses in the land. He knows—or can know any time he chooses—what we say, what we do, nay, what we think about. No human being, that is if he be indeed a man, has ever wielded such authority since the First Valentine first changed hands. Nay, by Cupid's shafts, a mature bachelor, with a taste for Gothic architecture, is not safe in his very seclusion in the Albany, although St. Senanus might be a man about town in comparison with him. The bachelors can't laugh at us married men. There are such beings as Co-RESPONDENTS. Shade of O. Smith! indulge us with one genial Ha! ha!

The Co-Respondents, however, must take care of themselves. An English husband has enough to do in these hard times so to order his own ways that he may avoid an official interview with awful Sir Cresswell.

I am an English husband. I write for husbands—and in the husband interest. Brother husbands! we are betrayed!

As far as I can yet see my way, our only chance of safety lies in combination, but we must combine secretly indeed; for the avengers are ever beside us, and the Fouquier-Tinville of matrimony is ready there at Westminster to slice off our heads for an unguarded word. Perhaps something may be done through the Masonic Lodges, if we can trust each other; but we must be speedy, for it will soon be held that to be a Mason is to be a brute, and to be a brute is cruelty, and cruelty entitles a wife to summary remedies indeed.

This awful truth has been recently forced upon my apprehension. In an idle moment, but a few weeks back, I resolved to make my way into the Divorce Court, to see how that dreadful class of business in which the Court deals is conducted. I had expected little more than a certain amount of amusement at the exhibition, with perhaps a little melo-dramatic thrill of horror if "The Dead Heart" in real life might happen to be on for trial. Little did I anticipate the result.

It is not so easy to get into these connubial shambles as you might suppose. Enter Westminster Hall by the great door, and the first indication that you are near the Grand Stand will be the presence of a group of firm-featured women at the right and upper hand of the hall by the steps leading into the old Chancellor's Court. There they are—they know their power—they look at you just as a group of tall brawny Horse Guards might look at a feeble civilian. Yes! there they stand, upon their own ground, and any one of them could give you a back-fall at a moment's notice; and, what is more—I repeat it—they all know it. They are not showily dressed, but like the Ironsides of the old Puritan days—fit for

service. Time was, as I have been given to understand, when the Court was first opened for business, that ladies of a different kind used to come down to Westminster to obtain a glimpse of the judge who was henceforward to be the supreme arbiter of the destinies of the female world. I have also been told by the gentlemen who frequented the Court in those days, that as far as they could judge from the exclamations they overheard, the result was very favourable to the presiding judge.

"Oh! what a dear man! I'm sure he wouldn't do anything unkind! Well, I'm not afraid of him!"

Such were the flowers with which the earlier steps of this Rhadamanthus of hearts were greeted by his devotees. Since these times, however, matters have been much changed. The nature of many of the trials, since the Court has settled down to serious work, of course excludes all notion of the presence of women, save of those who may unfortunately be mixed up with the case under discussion. For the most part the group of which I have made mention consists of witnesses, most of whom are there two or three days before they are wanted, with vengeance clearly written on their features. I should not like to have that rigid looking woman with the pinched lips engaged in the capacity of my own wife's confidential maid. I should fear that she might be disposed to take a somewhat one-sided view—not in my favour—should it ever happen that one of the rose-leaves in my matrimonial bower became at all crumpled through somebody's fault; nor do I think her presence generally calculated to inspire harmony and good-will in a household. She will swear hard.

The first effort is to make your way from this group in the outer hall to a narrow passage inside. A policeman at the door keeps on repeating "The Court is full," and repelling the applicants for admission even into the passage; although the gain is small even when you have secured a position there. You tap quietly at the door of the Court; but instead of admitting you the policeman inside quietly opens a little trap, and if you are not a barrister or attorney, or otherwise professionally engaged with the business in hand, you are again informed that "The Court is full!" At this moment your heart is in your mouth, for although you cannot even see through the trap into the body of the Court—a horrid red curtain is in the way—and the first surge of matrimonial agony here rolls upon your ear.

"Did you, or did you not come home in a beastly state of intoxication at four o'clock in the morning, although your poor wife—"

Bang goes the little trap, and you are cut off from hearing the answer of the miserable husband. What will happen next? Will Sir Cresswell with smiling lips intimate to the accused, that "he is free;" and will he be turned out into the body of the Hall rejoicing in his liberty, but to fall under the blows of those hard women outside? One has read of the Septembrists in Revolutionary France, and of the sly way in which the victims were consigned to the untender charge of the "*travail-leurs*" outside. I did not, indeed, notice any

marks of gore upon the pavement of the Hall; but with a little saw-dust, and a few buckets of water all traces of each incident might soon be washed away. The bodies, no doubt, would be removed into the Common Pleas. Besides, the case of *TUBBS v. TUBBS* is the first one taken this morning, so nothing can have yet occurred—of consequence.

I am standing in that awful passage still. There is a young and pretty woman leaning with her back against the door. I dare scarcely raise my eyes to note the fact. She gives me an awful idea of power—like a lithe hunting leopard in the Zoological Gardens. There is a stout, rather shabbily dressed man, of middle age, who has come down in a great hurry—for his first act is to take off his hat and swab his poor moist head; his second, to fix a pair of spectacles on his nose; and his third, to produce from his pocket a slip of paper, a subpoena, or sub-agony, or something of that sort, which he hands triumphantly to the policeman on guard in the passage, as entitling him to instant admission to the body of the court. Admission there, indeed! The policeman in the passage taps at the trap. The policeman in the court opens the trap, and you catch a glimpse of, I think, a somewhat well-disposed face—(but by this time you are in a frame of mind in which you would be ready to thank Jack Ketch for his obliging attentions)—with two red whiskers. There it is—Portrait of Policeman, 23 Z, in a frame. Whilst he inspects the slip of paper, which is held up by his brother officer, a thin, maundering voice reaches me from inside,—it is clearly that of some official personage, reading what I suppose is called a document here. The words I catch are these:—

"If ever, dearest Louisa, you could mark the palpitations of my feverish heart, you would know that every moment is an endless age of torment whilst I am separated from thy dear side. Could I but gaze for one instant on thy deep-blue eyes—"

Here there is a sharp dogmatic interruption—like that of a cracker during a cathedral-service.

"My Lud—*clear grey* in my copy."

"Deep blue, my Lud—deep blue, in mine."

Then follow some courteous tones.—Yes.—This must be Sir Cresswell at last!

"It is not of much consequence, Doctor Dobbs." (Gracious Powers, what do these stony-hearted men then reckon of consequence?) "As we have the 'original' before us, we need not dispute about copies. Go on."

"Deep blue eyes," the reader was proceeding, when it became necessary for him,—I must tell the truth,—to blow his nose, which he did in a very sonorous way, and then, "the rapture of that glance—"

Bang goes the trap again! It appeared that the policeman inside had taken counsel with the usher, and the result of their deliberations was, that the middle-aged man in the perspiration was informed through the trap that the case of *Moppet v. Moppet* and *Boiling* was not likely to occupy the attention of the court until next week, and that he could not be admitted, as "he was neither a professional man, nor a witness in

the case." The poor fellow drew back:—as his eye fell for a moment upon the young lady with her back to the door, I thought I marked in it a vindictive gleam. Could this be Moppet? and



was that glance an expression of his feeling to the sex in general, since Boiling had glided like a serpent into his paradise. However, my reflec-

tions soon took another turn. How about a man's love-letters?

Is it possible, dear Flora, that those remarkable

compositions, in which I endeavoured to disclose the nature of my sufferings to—as I then believed—thy not wholly unsympathising heart, shall ever be copied out at the rate of seventy words to the folio, and for the charge of three half-pence per folio, and delivered into the hands of those objectionable, heartless men in wigs and gowns, that they may serve as nets of my own knitting to entrap and bind me in my struggles? Shall I, like a foolish, thoughtless—but at the same time well-meaning—bee, be smothered in honey of my own collection? I know that thou hast preserved them—not without a few rose-leaves, and, I believe, some sprigs of lavender, in allusion to a playful passage which occurs in one of the later documents. It runs thus:—

Roses are red,
Diddle—diddle :
Lavender's blue—
Flora, by George !
Diddle—diddle—
How I love you !

Although it expresses the emotions of an honest heart, I should not like to have that passage read out in full court by the gentleman with the cold in his head—not only on account of the poetical liberty which I have taken with the metre (I mean with reference to the patent discrepancy in sound between the words “red” and “George”)—but because, even as far as the floral illustrations of my passion are concerned, I think I could do better with a view to publication. As I stand pondering over these things, another letter rises to my recollection, which I had addressed: “To my Flora, then in her Rose-Bower at Twickenham.” You were then stopping, dear Flo, with Mrs. Madrigal—Bessie Hincks was of the party. I remember that I had been torn away from thy beloved side (as I presume the writer in the case of *Tubbs v. Tubbs*, now *sub judice*) by some inconsiderate friends, and compelled by them, sorely against my own will, to dine with them at the Crown and Sceptre. When I returned home it was 1.45 A.M., or thereabouts. The passion pent up within my breast throughout that tedious banquet would have its way, and poured on in impetuous current through seven sheets of note-paper. This time I expressed myself in prose—but such prose!—a Niagara from a furnace—seething, burning, boiling, bubbling—red-hot from my manly heart. I cannot but fear that if this document were submitted to Sir Cresswell’s inspection on a cold morning in February, at 11 A.M., that learned judge might find the imagery overwrought, and of a somewhat Eastern and voluptuous character. Indeed, there was one contrast between a supposed Alhambra and a foul pot-house, and another between my Flora and the friends who had torn me from her beloved presence, of which I should never hear the last if my friend Molyneux—Molyneux the Black, we used to call him—were to get hold of it. He has a courteous but distant way of making allusions to any disagreeable little incident of this kind—the result of which would, in the long run, be my own disappearance from London life, and emigration to British Columbia. Then there was another letter in which I had confided to my Flora the aspira-

tions of my youthful ambition. I looked forward then to driving my Triumphal Car through the British Forum at a slapping pace indeed, although, for reasons not worth entering upon just now, I have not followed up the profession. But, as I remember, in the letter in question I had ventured to speak of the fifteen judges as of fifteen mature matrons, and perhaps Sir C. C. might not take this well, as he was upon the judicial bench at the time, and I have not had the opportunity I anticipated of setting him right upon points of law. There is but one thing to do. I will invite my Flora to accompany me this very afternoon upon a long walk, and fairly weary out her tender limbs. When sleep has sealed up her gentle eyelids, I will steal softly forth, and glide with that desk of my beloved one into my dressing-room, and abstract the documents. One never knows what may happen.

Whilst these thoughts are passing through my mind, and my cheeks are uncomfortably red—two young men have strolled into the passage, and tapped at the door with little ceremony. They have come down to enjoy the fun—they are obvious Clubbists—and it needs not any long experience to inform me that they must have chucked away the ends of their cigars at the entrance of Westminster Hall. The trap is summarily shut in their faces. Sir Cresswell does not keep open Court for them. Their turn will come—but not yet. Nature has set the indelible mark of “Co-Respondent” upon the brow of each of them. There will surely be a day when the policeman at the trap will give them admission to the Court without any difficulty, if they care to claim it. They try a little quiet joking—but it won’t do—you might as well offer a slice of nicely toasted bacon to a French gentleman, when half-way between Calais and Dover, as try joking here—that is, what they would call joking. One of the youths—the one with the mandarin hat—unless my eyes deceive me—has distinctly made ocular overtures to the young female leopard before alluded to. The young lady simply glares at him in reply: he might as well have winked at Medusa. I am sorry for him—so awful and stony is the gaze of that young Sphinx, in the leghorn, trimmed with black, at the foolish boy. Away, young Co-Respondents—back to your pool and your muddled betting-books—your time will come!

Then an elderly clergyman-looking man drops in, and tries the door, with a bland smile, just as though he were about to claim admission to his own vestry. The trap opens, and the usual few words of dialogue are exchanged, the result of which is that the reverend gentleman is left smiling in the passage just like one of us ordinary people. What can he be doing here? I should as soon have expected to meet such a man at Cremorne or the Cyder Cellars. His respectable consort cannot, I am very confident, have the smallest idea of the way in which he intended to occupy his morning. When that reverend gentleman left home after breakfast—he looks like a person who would have lodged in Suffolk Street—he spread false reports at a meeting of the

the S.P.C.K. His wife is gone with the children to the Soho Bazaar, or is spending her day with the friend of her childhood—now married to the Reverend Josiah Chasuble, and resident in the Polygon, Camberwell—with an abundant nursery. He is balked, and I am glad of it; but whom can one trust? When the trap opened this last time, there were no contentious voices—only dead silence broken by a low female moaning, and stifled sobs. Can Sir Cresswell have caused Mrs. Dobbs to be placed on the rack, and is the policeman with the red whiskers giving a last turn to the screw? I can't stand this—as a man—as a husband—as an Englishman—in the name of Flora, and womanhood—here goes! Down with Haynau and Sir Cresswell! Just as, in defiance of all constituted authority, I was about to make a violent assault on the door, in order to relieve Mrs. Dobbs from her agony, it suddenly opened, and, to my surprise, a gentleman stepped out who was evidently making strong efforts to suppress his laughter. With difficulty I repressed my indignation to the articulating point, and was about to give him a bit of my mind; when, on glancing at him a second time, I fancied I recognised the face—could it be? No. Yes it was my old friend—Horatio Lamb. We exchanged the friendly grasp—he passed his arm under mine, and led me out into the Hall.

My friend Lamb had, I believe, in early life, been upon the provincial boards, but he was not fond of alluding to this period of his career. He had subsequently been articled to an attorney, but, though admitted, I never heard that he had practised his profession on his own account. He had subsequently been secretary to a steam-packet company with enormous pretensions, but owing to a series of untoward circumstances they never succeeded:—as far as I am aware—in getting a vessel afloat, and the affairs of the company were subsequently wound up. Lamb next turned up in the wine-trade, in connection with a speculation for bringing South African sherry home to every Englishman's door; and during the epoch of his eventful career, he was much engaged with a project for amending the currency. I do not pretend to understand the question myself, but as he often explained to me in those days, when I invited him to dinner—poor fellow! I was sometimes afraid that he did not dine every day in the week—the result of his system, if adopted, would have been to add 800,000,000*l.* immediately to the national wealth, with unlimited powers of expansion—and it was based upon credit. Certainly no man knew more about that part of the subject than Lamb; but somehow or other there seemed to be some hitch about the adoption of his ideas. The successive Chancellors of the Exchequer, as he used to tell me, were “stupid dogs—stupid dogs, sir; slaves of routine.” I fear he was sadly out at elbows when we last parted; it was some years since we had met; and now he presented every appearance of a smiling, prosperous gentleman. “Come along,” said he, “come along; my brougham is waiting, and it will take us round to Great George Street,—my offices, you know.”

I knew nothing about the matter, and I confess I was thunderstruck, but not even in the midst of

my surprise could I lose sight of Sir Cresswell's horrid cruelties, and the agonies which Mrs. Dobbs must at that moment be undergoing. I stopped my friend in the middle of the Hall, and seizing him solemnly by the coat, said:—

“Lamb—friend of my youth—I rejoice to see you well, and to all appearance a prosperous man, and at any other time I would cheerfully go with you, and a proud man I should be to sit by your side in your own brougham, with your own horse in shafts before you—”

“My own horse,” broke in Lamb, “pooh! pooh! pair of horses—as neat a pair of greys as ever stepped. I gave a cheque for 240*l.* for them the other day to our friend Hinchinbroke.”

Now Hinchinbroke was Sir Jasper Hinchinbroke, Bart., of Sloply Mead, Lincolnshire, and I had myself endeavoured, but in vain, to procure for Lamb, some years ago, the situation of clerk in the office of his bailiff; but this was neither here nor there just then. I couldn't get that poor creature's agony out of my mind.

“Lamb,” I continued. “I won't stir from this Hall, till I know what is taking place within that horrid den of iniquity.”

“What den? The Divorce Court? Sweetest spot in town!”

“But those sobs—that moaning—those groans—it was a woman's woe. I tell you, Lamb, Sir Cresswell is torturing a female in there!”

The unfeeling man actually burst into a long fit of laughter.

“Groans—agony—woe—stuff and nonsense. That's only my client, Mrs. Dobbs, repeating her lesson; and devilish well she does it, too. I gave her the first principles myself; but, egad! she has so far outstripped her teacher, that I was fairly obliged to leave the Court lest the jury should catch me laughing—and that would have done for our case in no time. We had to prove cruelty in order to entitle us to dissolution, and so I called Mrs. Dobbs, and left her to make out her own case. Women have a surprising genius for these things. But, come along, and we'll talk as we go. By the way, what brought you down to the Divorce Court? Nothing wrong at home, eh?”

I was enabled to give my friend Lamb the honest assurance, dearest Flora, that despite of the few occasions on which our peculiarities of character slightly clash, there was no disposition on the side of either of the partners, trading under the name of the matrimonial firm of “Mr. and Mrs. Jones,” to dissolve their connection, and wind up the concerns of that well-known establishment. It may be that we have both discovered that there are other flowers of the field besides roses, and other birds in the air besides the nightingale and the lark—that Romeo will lose his figure, and Juliet suffer from occasional nervous attacks. Still, and on the whole, Flora is quite prepared to scratch out the eyes of any lady who should venture upon any disparaging remarks with regard to her beloved Frederick; and Frederick stands equally ready and willing to punch any gentleman's head who may insinuate that improvements in his Flora are possible. Petrarchs and Lauras of XL can you hope for more?

In return for my explanations, my friend H.

Lamb related to me, that after having made many attempts to improve his condition in the world, and as often failed, the opening of the Divorce Court had given him the opportunity of which he had been so long in search. He had now established himself as lady's solicitor in Great George Street, Westminster—a genteel address, and handy to the Court. He added, that as the business in which he had engaged required the most opposite qualifications, he had taken to himself a partner, the Antipodes to himself in all respects. This

gentleman's name was Rackem. The door-plate in Great George Street bore the inscription of

L A M B
AND
R A C K E M,
Solicitors.

Mr. Lamb took the lady department; Mr. Rackem looked after the gentlemen. Mr. Lamb avenged the wives; Mr. Rackem the husbands. Mr. Lamb used as a seal a stricken dove; Mr. Rackem,



Waller's eagle, with the device, "That eagle's fate and mine are one." Mr. Lamb gave little dinners in a charming little house in Chapel Street, Park Lane; Mr. Rackem lived at Camberwell, in a stern stucco villa, protected by two stucco dogs sitting upon their own hard tails, and never entertained anybody. Mr. Lamb was the Corinthian, Mr. Rackem the Doric, pillar of the establishment in Great George Street.

"But, my dear fellow," he said, "I'll tell you all about it another time—here we are in Maddox Street. A thought of my own. I have established business relations with a French lady who has undertaken to dress my clients for the Court. Madame LEOCADIE LAREINE is a most remarkable woman; she can enter into the spirit of a case. She has, as you may say, a feeling for an allegation, and can dress a lady up to the mark. You can't conceive what a mess the ladies would make of it for themselves. They overdo or underdo the

thing. No woman her own client—no client her own mantua-maker. Madame Lareine is a decided genius. I have known her dress a lady, who couldn't be brought up to town until the last moment, from the affidavits."

We entered the ingenious French lady's establishment by a private door, and were shown up-stairs to a drawing-room, with a table in the centre with a few bonnets and caps upon it. Two or three dresses were spread out upon the sofas, and as we came in Madame Lareine was gesticulating away in a very energetic manner, to a pretty, but somewhat overdressed lady, about eight-and-twenty years of age, as I should judge.

"Madame, if you present yourself so before the court *vous êtes perdue*. That bonnet would even turn what you call de common jury. See here, Monsieur Lamb, here is Madame Barbar, who is to go to de court to-morrow, and all depends upon *cruauté*, and her idea is a green shot groa, with de

pink bonnet. Oh, *mais*, madame, your husband—*le barbare*—would give that in *justification*.”

Lamb whispered to me : “ A client of my own. Barber v. Barber,—on to-morrow at eleven :” and then aloud,—

“ Mrs. Barber, I have the responsibility of your case, and you must allow Madame Lareine to decide what is for the best. Have you read the evidence, Madame—and what is it to be ? ”

“ Oh, yes, sare, I have sat up three night, and here is de result. Robe of black gros, wid tree flounces—de usual *robe à la divorcée* ; crinoline not *prononcée*—*chapeau à la Cresswell* ; and here was de thought. After reading de letters of Madame’s from Florence, I put in that small bunch of *pensées*—violets. Indian shawl, leetel collar *aux trois larmes*, leetle muff also wid *mouchoir* not too fine. What you say to that ? ” And then turning round to Mrs. Barber :—

“ Madame, you are half away across between de British matron and *la femme abandonnée* : not too stern, not too mild : you have a right to your Opera box, for you have de *dot*, and to your small shild.”

After some discussion, Mrs. Barber accepted her fate, having only compromised for permission to wear a pair of gold ear-rings.

“ Madame—it must be—but *vous vous compromettez*—de Scotch lawyer against you will say you are fond of admiration. Ah ! *quel horreur* ! but it must be so. Have you seen my special jury sleeves, Monsieur Lamb, and *le petit bonnet à l’évanouie* ? Dat is very good.”

It was finally settled, Mrs. Barber making no objection, that I was to be the next morning at his offices, and attend the great trial of Barber v. Barber.

GAMMA.


(To be continued.)

LIFE IN A FRENCH KITCHEN. By C.

(Continued from p. 152.)

CHAPTER V. A STANDING CONTROVERSY.

WE had many controversies in the kitchen, some of which were not argued with much coolness on either side, particularly those in which the comparative merits of the armies and navies of the two nations were concerned. Nations are apt to forget their reverses; but the French totally ignore the history of all campaigns in which they have had the worst of it, and their history, as written by themselves, progresses by stepping from one success to the next. When it is brought home to them that, since Fontenoy, they have never gained a great victory, or had



the best of a campaign against us, except in the little wars of the colonies, they are ever fertile in such excuses as the fortune of war, or a bad general, who was, or ought to have been, shot for cowardice, incapacity, or treachery, or something else that robbed their army of its glory. In discussing these points, I generally had the worst of the argument, because Velay and Duchêne are pretty well crammed on the subject, both being required to take up for their examinations as to the details and plans of the great European wars and battles, of which I only know the results. The French excel in everything that admits of being reduced to a system, and, as an army admits of any amount of organisation, the French army cannot be surpassed for system, discipline, and equipment. The half million of all ranks are not on paper only. They exist and are available, and they possess unbounded spirit and emulation. They are a warlike people, and their system of promotion (by which a soldier may, like Pélissier, become a field-marshal, by study and by good and distinguished conduct in face of an enemy,) gives a stimulus to ambition which is unknown in armies that live under the cold shade of an aristocracy. All Frenchmen, soldiers as well as civilians, have a good address, and, like other monkeys, can imitate the manners of their betters when they rise in the scale of humanity. When a soldier becomes an officer, he is removed to another regiment at once. He drops his former associates, and his new friends cannot say he has not the ideas or manners of a gentleman, for the same reason that Hamlet's madness was not observed in England, where all were as mad as he. When an officer cannot pass an examination—which, even for the infantry, is rather severe—he remains where he is. As there is nothing that the vanity of a Frenchman will not tell him to attempt—from conic sections to the command of the Channel fleet—most of the officers have tried to pass examinations, and they are, or were, immediately after undergoing *cram*, pretty well informed on the general subjects of military education, such as history (French editions), including the details of great French victories, and the articles of the principal treaties of Europe, particularly those in which they have kept faith and “perfidious” Albion has broken it. They are fluent in the use of technical terms; not only of what we call “pipeclay,” but of military science, including fortification, tactics, and even strategy. Our Lieutenant Alfred cannot pass his examination, but he would be called a well-informed man in any society.

The men seem to be dressed and equipped for service. The knapsack is cleverly strapped, and appears to sit light, and the wearer is not constantly obliged to lean forward to jerk it into a higher and more comfortable place. Whether there is much inside, I cannot say. The French are not celebrated for carrying more linen than they want.

I met one of our great clothing contractors in Paris, and had a long conversation with him. He said that the cloth used in France for the troops is of the same quality as that used in England; but it looked better, and it is possible that he may

have been rather prejudiced on the subject. Government professes to manufacture everything the army wears, and there is certainly no contract-look in the French soldier.

They break down now and then, like other armies, in the commissariat and the other civil departments. At the beginning of the siege of Sebastopol, for instance, their available resources were no more equal to the occasion than ours. My friend, the contractor, told me that the French Government spent nearly a million sterling in contracts in England during the Crimean war. He was, when I saw him, in Paris with an eye to business, ready to tender for the supply of anything in case of war between France and Austria. However, the French are naturally proud of an army that, within the present century, has been to every capital in Europe—except London. And here French vanity—a passion of which we proud islanders have no conception—supplies them with the soothing conviction that the Emperor has nothing to do but to land an army on the English coast and march straight to London.

The Channel rather bothers them. Louis Velay told me quite calmly, that in case the Emperor ever made the attempt, and failed, we would have to thank the twenty miles of sea, and not ourselves, for our good fortune. “What,” said this wretched youth who cannot pass his examination, “was to have prevented the Great Emperor from going straight to London, if he had won the battle of Waterloo, but your twenty miles of sea?” I asked him, if he had ever read a very amusing book, called “The History of Events that have Never Occurred.” But he had never heard of it: the book had not been translated into French.

The occupations of Paris in 1814 and 1815 are delicate subjects. The thoughts of them make French blood to boil, French teeth to grind, and French hearts to beat with hopes of retaliation some day. They do not care the least about the other Allies having been twice to Paris, because the old Emperor sent armies, or went himself, to their capitals whenever he pleased. But a French army has not been to London yet. It is therefore the day-dream of the army and of all ranks of society, and its feasibility is never doubted for a moment. A war with England would be the most popular of all wars; it would place every man and every sous at the disposal of the Emperor, for it would give the nation an opportunity of rubbing off old scores. We may rest assured that if he ever finds his popularity on the wane, and his throne slipping from under him, he will play the last and greatest card in his hand, and declare war against England. If he fails, he is *in statu quo ante bellum*, but a great success by sea and then by land makes him in glory second only to his uncle.

There is a general impression among alarmists, military as well as civil, that the Emperor of the French has only to succeed in landing an army on our coast, and then to march in one column straight to London. But there are certain rules of war, which, though they may be modified by circumstances, have been the same in all ages; and no general, let alone a French general, who always thinks as much of his own fame as of the glory of France, dare act contrary to these rules.

We will suppose that as the French are not buccaneers, their object is not to make a raid on the coast, but to pay us off for the occupations of Paris by an occupation of London.

To attain this object, they must, first of all, be permanent masters of the sea,—our Channel fleet, the fleet at Spithead, and the reserves being either taken, or dispersed, or blockaded in their harbours. For the French to succeed in anything but a raid, or the empty glory of hoisting their flag in some town on the coast, such as Brighton or Hastings, there must be no English fleet upon the sea.

One great rule of war is, that all operations are made upon a base-line between two points, which must be forts or fortified harbours containing supplies, and upon which points an army can retire in case of reverse. A second rule is, that the distance between these base-points increases in a fixed ratio to the distance to be advanced. That is, the further an army has to march, the broader must be the base of operations. A third rule is, that all operations must be on lines perpendicular to the base-line. And a fourth rule is, that there must be a complete communication between the two points of the base-line, and also between all the points of operation upon it. From this last rule may be deduced the corollary, that an army should have all its enemies in its front. There is such a thing as a "flying column," or a *colonne en air*, as the French call it, which is a body of troops equipped, not for speed, as is generally supposed, but with supplies and the munitions of war, to enable it to operate without a base and in all directions. A flying column is seldom used in regular warfare among civilised nations, but to a great extent by us in India, and by the French in Algeria. An army can act contrary to these rules when it has on either flank an arm of the sea, or a river, or a chain of mountains, or any other obstacle to prevent the operations of an enemy.

Let me exemplify the above rules by the operations of the Allies in the Crimea—ground with which we ought all to be so familiar. The base was short, from Kamiesh Bay to Balaclava. If the operations had been extended farther into the peninsula, it would have been necessary to extend the base to the east. The base could not have been from Eupatoria to any point to the south, because the operations against Sebastopol would have been outside the base, and perpendicular to no point of it. Although our troops could see strings of waggons bringing supplies daily from the north into the besieged city, yet we could not attempt to cut them off, because an advance by us would have placed Sebastopol in our rear.

To enable the French to march to London, they must have a base, and a broad one too. Sheerness on the right flank, and Dover on the left, with possession of Deal and all the harbours on the coast between those two places, is the best base our coast offers. On the right of the operations there would be the Medway and the Thames; and the distance from the French coast to one point of the base would be the shortest sea-passage that exists—a great advantage. But it would be impossible for an army to advance without getting possession of Sheerness and Dover, both of which,

it would be hoped, could stand a siege of two months at least. Chatham is on the road between Sheerness and London, and, though a weak place, it could not be left without being taken, for it would be a standing threat on the right flank of the enemy's operations.

The coast between Dover and Newhaven offers only a poor base. The harbour of the latter place is tidal and small, and is besides commanded by the rising land to the west.

Between Newhaven and Bournemouth the harbours are not adapted for the disembarking of large bodies of troops and of the *matériel* of war—such as guns, shot, and shell, horses, and commissariat stores. The troop-ships would have to anchor in the open roadsteads, and the process of landing troops, even if it was ever so well organised, would be tedious; and a gale of wind would put a stop to it altogether, and would jeopardise the safety of those already landed. If a reverse happens to troops where they cannot defend themselves, or receive succour from their ships, or re-embark, they must lay down their arms. This shows the necessity of having forts or fortified harbours at the extremities of the base of operations.

There is a good base to be found on the coast between Bournemouth and Lymington, for the Solent affords one continued anchorage, and the means of landing troops in smooth water. It is generally supposed that every French general has in his pocket a detailed plan of a march to London; and if they could all be induced to lay the produce of their brains on a table, I have no doubt it would be found that the majority of them would suggest that the Solent should contain one point, if not both, in the base of operations. The locality presents one little difficulty in the fortifications round Portsmouth harbour. The Duke used to say, that Portsmouth was not defensible; but when the new line of forts from the head of the harbour to the Solent is finished, a French general might hesitate before he commenced the siege as part of his programme of a march to London,—that is, if the Emperor will only wait till the forts are finished, which he will probably not do. Though there are some fine harbours west of the Solent, particularly Portland Bay, yet the further we go west, the greater become the distances from the French coast, and from our coast to London; and when we once get round Land's End, this difficulty increases.

On examining the coast to the north from the mouth of the Thames, it will be found that there are no defensible harbours affording points for a base of operations. The Wash is a mud-flat at low water, and Yarmouth is an open roadstead. Supposing that the operations are undertaken with a view to the occupation of London, on a large scale and according to the rules of war, it will be seen that there are only two parts of the coast which could be selected on bases of operations with any hopes of success—namely, from Sheerness to Dover, and from Bournemouth to Lymington. As for the number of troops required to defend London, we ought to give our Minister of War credit for being the best judge of the situation. What he and other wise heads think is required is being done; and when the tug of war com-

mences, as it assuredly will within a few years,
I have no doubt, but that we shall be ready to
make a respectable stand-up fight.

At the same time, I hope the battle will be
fought at sea.

(To be continued.)

DIVORCE A VINCULO ; OR, THE TERRORS OF SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL.

(Continued from p. 191.)



ow would Flora take it? There was a good deal to be said for this new theory of keeping two human beings chained up together only so long as they themselves chose to wear the fetters; but it was clear enough, even to me, that the female mind wouldn't give up the notion of the eternity of the marriage bond without a severe struggle. Look at the wedding ring, and its circular form

O

How smooth, and round, and never-ending it is; made, too, of metal—of enduring, uncorroding gold!

Now the British feminine theory is, that women are angels. This, however, must be a loose way of talking; for, as far as I am aware, it is difficult to bring an angel into Court and institute a comparison. Certainly, as far as we know anything about the matter, women have much the advantage. Speaking as an individual, I have no opinion of that combination of heads and wings which painters and sculptors have imagined as typical of the angelic nature. It is an unsatisfactory sort of mixture at the best; and at the worst it would

be an awful idea to have the partner of your toils, and the sharer of your joys, buzzing about you in true Caudle mood, and humming her sweet reproaches into your overwrought ear. I should always be afraid by day lest Mrs. Jones should settle on my nose, and at night she might perhaps sing her dove-like pinions in the candle. One might put her in a cage, indeed; but what a sad thought if she was to hurt her sweet nose against the bars; besides, what would SIR CRESSWELL say?

This, I think, is fairly put; but, at the same time, I feel very sure that any suggestion for curtailing the eternity of the marriage-bond will not meet with the approval of the British female, especially in the middle rank of English life: on the whole, women have got on pretty well under the old system, and like things to proceed in the regular way, and without disturbance of the old ideas. If the Irish bricklayer in the lane round the corner is in the habit of knocking his Norah Creina down every Sunday morning, and executing a *pas*—which certainly cannot be called a shadow-dance—upon her prostrate form, my dear little friend Mrs. Cozyville still continues to decorate her own humming-bird's nest with Spartan firmness. The Irish girl must take her chance, and bear her own cross, as she, Sophy Cozyville, must bear hers. Poor Norah has drawn a bad number in the man-lottery—worse luck! She, Sophy, has her own trials: didn't she take that big husband of hers to Madame Elise's but the other day, and point out to him the sweetest little bonnet after which her soul lusted, but of which

she was resolved to deny herself the acquisition upon economical grounds; and did that hulking fellow take the hint? Not he; although she had not faintly indicated several sources, connected with C.'s personal expenses, on which such a saving might have been effected that the transaction with Madame E. might have been completed without imprudence. To be sure, she had declared that "she wouldn't hear of such a thing for the world!" but C. might have been magnanimous for once, and taken a spring into the sacrificial gulf without craning. The stupid fellow simply drew her to his heart behind the door of the back drawing-room in Madame's establishment. Sophy came out of the contest, kissed, praised, and angry, and immediately bought a "straw" in the Arcade for 7s. 6d., and made C. carry it home in the paper. All women have their trials. It is not, however, necessary to summon NEMESIS in the presence of Sir Cresswell, nor to invoke from his lips the dreadful *fat*, "As you were!"

I think I have noticed since "The Divorce Court" has become a fact, a great falling-off in

the popularity of doctrines connected with the Rights of Women. I remember well the time when the sweet sufferers would sit for hours at the feet of any grim Gamaliel, who would explain to them the nature of their wrongs, and descant upon her own spasmodic struggles to escape from the intolerable agonies of the married state. He must have been a bold man, indeed, who would have tried any nonsense with any of them. It was only necessary to be in their company for five minutes, and you would at once come to the conclusion, that had they been men, in place of gaunt angels, they would have spent their lives in one perennial stream of hot water. They would have been actively engaged in Chancery suits and actions for libel: they would have had their heads punched: they would have been perpetual principals in the preliminaries of duels which never came off: and you would have constantly seen their names paraded in the newspapers in connection with "correspondence which we have been requested to publish."

In the midst of disputes of this nature I feel perfectly convinced most of these avenging angels would have spent their lives had they been denuded of their angelic character, and converted into gross men. Nay! I cannot think, even as it is, that their husbands make what sailors call "fair weather" of it. I can only judge of other men by myself, and I am sure I would as soon think of flinging my shoe at the head of Tom Sayers, the Champion, as of commencing hostilities against any member of that heroic band. I should feel that my penultimate resource was my boot-room and a short clay—my last, the razor. Even at the last moment I should, however, be pained with the uncomfortable thought, that the "rash act" would be pointed out to my Lucretia's friends as conclusive evidence of my disturbed intellect, and of the cruel sufferings she so long endured without a complaint—without a murmur! "Ah! if the world had known!" Doves and Lambs! But this is hard upon a poor fellow down amongst his boots, and waiting patiently for an interview with the coroner!

The denunciations of this class of angel against the Marriage Bond have, as I have observed, been lately at a severe discount. The real sufferers, moreover, have never swerved in their allegiance—the flesh and blood Marys, and Ellens, and Elizas, who have taken their lot patiently, and done their best to hide from the knowledge of their friends the frenzy and brutality of the Georges, and Philips, and Thomases. The very women—true angels, these ones—who ought to make the complaint, and to rejoice at the rupture of the Gordian knot—hate you if you make it for them, and hug the chain which has worn into their tender arms. I have known a woman married for years to a fellow whom all we men knew to be a drunken beast: her life was, practically, spent in a tap-room, yet was she a person of refined and cultivated tastes: his fortune and well-nigh her own were spent in follies of the grossest kind; but, at last, drunkenness fairly got the best of it amongst the sister-band of vices. Cursing and filth became her daily portion—yet she never wavered in her care and tendance of the

drunkard until, at last, his soul staggered away one morning into the next world—between an oath and a dram. The widow cried her eyes out over his vinous remains, and caused them to be interred in great state with an eulogy engraved in marble of the public and private virtues of this most intolerable brute. After his death poor Lizzy Heath—I speak of her by her maiden name—went into mourning, and wore widow's weeds until her own poor heart was at rest. She might have married a second time if she had pleased—but she would never listen to wooer's voice again;—not upon the very legitimate grounds that she had made trial of man's love, and found it a brandy bottle, but because she would never be unfaithful to her drunken spouse of seraphic memory. I verily believe she treasured up the brandy bottle with which he had killed himself as a sacred relic of the dear deceased. SIR CRESSWELL won't see many petitioners of this class in his Court.

Thoughts such as these passed through my head as I was walking down Regent Street and preparing my mind for an interview with Flora, in the course of which it was my intention to introduce mention of the Divorce Court in a jaunty way—just as a man might speak of a pleasant evening with Robert-Houdin, or the last Pantomime. It was all stuff, of course—this institution could never affect my own relations with the angel-world, but I confess that what I had seen, and especially the tenor of my communications with my friend Lamb, had somewhat shaken my confidence in the eternity of existing relations between N and M. Hitherto we had only known of Death, but now it was DEATH and SIR CRESSWELL. What, if I should become a disreputable man upon town once more? Why should I be better than my neighbour—or dear Flora more constant than my neighbour's wife? We might shake hands and part to-morrow. LAMB AND RACKEM would get up a case which would restore liberty to either party to the contract. What an odd sensation to be in Regent Street at 4 p.m. with a cigar in my mouth, and my hands in my pockets—to go out and come in when I liked—nobody to trouble me with comments—or to interfere, by so much as a look, with my proceedings. "I will be free as air. I will be lord of my own presence—just like that foreign gentleman in the light grey paletôt with the velvet facings. I am sure no loving eye ventures to pry too curiously into his proceedings." Nay, I might in my turn become a wooer again—we middle-aged men know all about women and their ways—we have such advantages over the boys, that it is almost dastardly to enter the lists against them. After all, why should the forty-year men dash from their lips the enchanted cup which Houris will force upon them? The boys in their turn will succeed to our present attractions—and have their day. *Vive la joie!* Shall it be ANNIE, or LUCY, or little THERÈSE who may be positively said to be expanding into ripe and delicious womanhood at Arles—by the banks of the rapid Rhone—on my behalf? Surely, when she said last summer, "*Oui! Monsieur J., je vous aime, et même beaucoup!*" that little Gallic fairy could not be laughing at me! No, that was out of the

question. But then there is Annie Lorie, down in Perthshire—she too is waiting for me like the Spirit of the Waterfall—pale as a moonbeam, but warm and soft, and full of tricks as a kitten. I will not break her young heart. Annie shall be blest. And Therèse! what will become of her? She will be dragged to the Mairie by some beast of a French captain with red hands—or by a pale mesmeric humbug who calls himself a physician. Could I cut myself into pieces, they should all be happy: but it is clear that the British Legislature has only proceeded one step—one faltering insufficient step—in the right direction. There is a good deal in the theory of Polygamy, so it be rightly applied. But, hey-day, what is this? Six o'clock. I must hurry home, or Flora will be kept waiting for dinner, and I shall get into a scrape.

It will be unnecessary to give the dialogue between the soother of my existence, and myself, at any great length; but it will, I think, be sufficient to set out the sum of the arguments I employed. I confess that at the hearing my own propositions did not tell as well as they appear to do when arranged fairly in order as below. The contest was an unequal one. When Serjeants Boozey and Spigot are engaged in hot argument at the bar—Boozey's firm soul is never diverted from its set purpose by the personal charms of Spigot. Should Spigot even allow a diamond drop to trickle down his learned cheek—Boozey would not care a button about it. The emotions with which his rival's soul was distracted, would be nothing to him, or he might even suppose that here was an attempt to tamper with the jury. If Spigot should interrupt the flow of his eloquence, in an irregular way, he would fix his hands the more firmly on his dogmatic hips and solicit the intervention of the Bench in restraint of his antagonist. Now, it is not so easy to maintain the rivulet of logic within its proper banks when you are arguing with an exceedingly pretty woman.

And Flora is a pretty woman, although she has pleaded guilty to xxviii. for the last x years; but I have frequently noticed that it is the case with our fair countrywomen, that when they have been twenty-eight years of age for about twelve years, their ripe autumn is even more attractive than the primrose-time of sweet seventeen. When they have stood at twenty-eight for about four years, they fall off, and then pick up again by some wonderful process of Nature's animal chemistry. We do not, indeed, so immediately connect them with the notion of Fawns, Fairies, Flowers, and other such trivial conceits, but something far better has taken the place of these mere moonbeams of the mind. Does not the enraptured poet speak of the Widow Malone as—

— an armful of joy?

By Paphos and Cnidus I swear that those rounded, but still symmetric forms—those bright intelligent eyes, rich with the rogueries of x years—are better worth than the puling sentimentalities of the boarding-schools for young ladies. Who would spend his days with an Italian greyhound, or as gentleman of the bed-chamber to a Canary bird? I missed some of my very best points by

allowing my eye to revel over the polished smoothness of Flora's arm. She has a way of resting her elbow—it is white and dimpled—on the chair; she then permits the hand to drop forward, so that her cheek rests upon the back of it—just where my masculine knuckles would be—and the taper-fingers hanging down complete the work of fascination. Even the late Sir William Pollett would, I think, have been puzzled to show cause against Flora, when she has taken up this—her favourite—position, and has brought the artillery of her eyes fairly into action.

As nearly as I can remember, I spoke as follows:

“Marriage; my dearest Flora, was an institution ordained for the happiness—not the misery—of the human race. If it be asserted that reciprocal affection constitutes the best reason for contracting such an union as the one indicated—and I am sure my Flora would never defend the meretricious mockery of money marriages—surely it follows as the natural correlative of this argument, that reciprocal aversion is a sound reason for dissolving the bond. The priest and the magistrate can give the person—they can give no more. Our affections are our own. It is not every one who has been so blest—so doubly and trebly blest—in a wife as I have been; but put the case that I had blundered into a marriage with Margaret Dobbs. That Daisy, that Pearl, would soon to me have been but Hateful Peg. Should I have been compelled to Peg on to the end of the chapter? (Flora intimated that such would have been my duty.) What! to feel one's home a Lazaret—never to hear words other than those of whining and reproach, to be kept working all one's life like a horse in a mill, for an object one loathed and despised. What if Peg took to physicking herself, or to acrid theology, or to jealousy, or to dram-drinking, or even to simple ‘nagging’” (Flora suggested that I should pray for strength), “but,” I continued, “the result would be, that I should be miserable and Peg not happy. (I may here be permitted to remark parenthetically, that I was well aware that Flora entertained a most deeply-rooted aversion to Miss Dobbs, hence I had selected that lady for illustration.) But carry the matter one step further. Suppose, Flora, that during the period when Peg had me on the rack, and was screwing me up with all the tenderness of a sincere Dominican, I had met you either in the first blushing unconsciousness of your youthful beauty, or still worse, now, when the rosebud has kept its early promise, and the mature and lovely woman stands confessed before me in all her glowing charms; should I have been bound down to my Hobson's choice?” (Flora intimated that, under such circumstances, she should have regarded a glance of admiration as an insult); “but, Flora, put the case, only put the case—that your bright glance had rested on me, not wholly as an object to excite disgust—suppose, just suppose, my own dearest girl, that you had pitied me, and surely so gentle a being (I have always observed that ladies like to be called ‘beings’) as my Flora would have pitied the sufferings which her own beauty had pro-

voked; we all know to what feeling pity is akin! Here, then, are three creatures—forgive me, Flora—one creature, Peg Dobbs: a mere man, that is myself: and a bright angel, I need not say who that is—all wretched. At this moment, Sir Cresswell glides down, to his Court in his brougham, like a beneficent genius on a sunbeam, and sets us all free. Do you suppose that such an union as that between Hateful Peg and myself could be hallowed to all eternity? No; she was inflicted upon me, like an ulcer of which I was to get rid

as best I could—but not with her—no! not with her was I to lead the bitter life for ever and for aye.” (By Heavens, at this moment a tear stole out from the silken fringe of Flora’s eye, and I felt myself an unmitigated rascal.) “But let us take the other side of the question; let us suppose you, my Flora, bound by a few inconsiderate words to some wretched brute; such an animal as we men know other men can be!” (At this point I resolved to pitch into my own side without stint or mercy.) “Is there to be no remedy? Are all



The Case according to the Petitioner's statement.

the sweet emotions of your soul to be the daily food for the mockery of some drunken Caliban, who might even—I tremble to think of it—raise his hand against your gentle head? The thought distracts me. Ay, and a woman may be made miserable enough, even though her husband does not, like a madman, actually forget his manhood, and strike her whom he was bound to protect from all harm at the cost of his own miserable life. Imagine yourself, Flora, married to a pompous fool; or to a man of cold, unsympathising nature, one who would not appreciate your high intellectual gifts, or bask in the radiance of your playful smile. Imagine yourself a cog in a Baker Street machine—the wife of an eminent solicitor—the mother of eight children—all as measly as young pigs, and treated as though you were not fit to direct him; not he, you.” (Flora told me not to be ‘nasty,’ when I spoke of the young pigs

—but the latter part of the sentence was not without weight.) “Surely here a judicial separation would be mercy to both parties; and a dissolution a foretaste of Paradise. Yes! I could bear the thought of my own sufferings in connection with Miss Dobbs; but the idea of my Flora wrongly mated is more than I can endure.”

I need not insist further upon the arguments I employed. I had resolved to go so far as to maintain that incompatibility of temper—that is, the mere fact that two human beings were miserable together, was enough to justify them in seeking for a rupture of the chain which galled without restraining them; but there should be perfect parity on both sides, and in all respects. Flora, sweet soul! seemed to me to be an average representative of British feminine feeling on such matters. The woman, happy in her marriage, esteems it as blasphemy to hint at any termi-

nation of so happy a union; her poor sister who is kicked, thumped, scorned, derided, and generally kept down, is not so firm in her views. The happy ones will keep their toiling sisters on the gridiron, at all events; the unhappy ones sometimes wriggle about a little, and think that a woman's lot is so hard under existing arrangements that it might be no great sin if the curb-chain was loosed off a link or two.

It was very odd, and quite contrary to my expectation; but when I mentioned to Flora that

I had casually met with Lamb, she took it so well that I was emboldened to proceed one step further, and mention what I had seen at Madame Léocadie Lareine's. She was most curious about the dresses; and when I described to her the *robe à-la-divorcée* with its three flounces, my Flora almost sprang from her chair with excitement, and informed me, that three flounces had not been worn for at least two years. She was evidently drawing inferences unfavourable to Madame Lareine's skill as an *artiste*, but I could not help



The Case according to the Respondent's statement.

thinking that the French lady might have her reasons for not sending a mourning wife into court attired in the very newest fashion. Flora also wanted to know all about Mrs. Barber,—was she pretty?—how was her hair done?—how old was she?—had she good teeth?—did she seem pained at her position?—was she a bold thing? I managed matters with such dexterity that my beloved girl actually pressed me to attend the meeting the next day at the offices of LAMB AND RACKEM, and to be present at the great trial itself.

Flora was full of the Divorce Court all night—not but what she considered it a very shocking thing—but I placed the matter before her in so many ways that curiosity maintained its hold of her sweet imagination, and I was aroused from a most delightful dream at 6.50 A.M., the next morning by her own taper fingers, and informed

that if I wanted to be in time for that odious place, I must display energy of character. Now I had been dreaming of fat oysters, and by one of those strange vagaries in which the human soul, when half-slumbering, appears to delight, had supposed myself to be gifted with submarine faculties, and to be spending an hour or two down amongst the oyster-beds off the Essex coast. From the very lips of one of these delicate crustaceæ—who indeed had fired up at the bare suggestion—I was receiving the most positive assurances that there was nothing in the stories about the oyster-disease which had been lately palmed on the world. A little scarlet fever there might be among the young ones—nothing more. He was about to treat the charge as libellous, and take the propagators of this scandal into court. Did I think that Mr. Edwin James was the best hand in such cases, or would it be better at once

to secure the services of the Attorney-General? It was at this point that my Flora broke in on my half-life, and drove me to my shower-bath in a February morning, and the stern realities of human existence. I felt that it was better to yield implicit obedience to the still small voice of my admirable consort, or it might be that Sir Cresswell would have a word to say to me, and be indisposed to admit as a plea of confession and avoidance my story about the oysters,—which was, however, I protest, true to the letter.

At a few minutes before nine o'clock I reached the offices in Great George Street, and even at this early hour found the Divorce World wide awake. A number of clerks were copying out letters and filling up forms in a lower room—what forms! and what letters!—and I was informed by one of these young gentlemen that the two partners were at breakfast in Mr. Lamb's private room, but L. had left word that on my arrival I was to be shown up-stairs.

Mr. Lamb introduced me at once to the sterner member of the firm. Mr. Rackem was a tall man with high cheek bones, and a double eye-glass. His trousers were made of some gray mixture, and short for him. He wore high-lows, and had a cast in his eye. He was just the sort of man you would expect to find presiding over the Kentish Fire at an Orange meeting in the famous county of Derry. There was a look of "No Surrender" about him, which suggested very forcibly the idea that you would rather have that gentleman for you than against you, if any little ruffle had occurred in the placid lake of your domestic existence. My friend Lamb was the very opposite of all this. He had, I think, gathered flesh since we had last met; and I was not quite satisfied at first with a look about the corner of his eye, which seemed to me to be somewhat indicative of cunning; but then, of course, a man's features do take a colour from his usual pursuits; and when I considered the class of clients with which poor Lamb had to deal, I could not but admit that he had great need of caution and circumspection. Mr. Lamb was making a light breakfast off chocolate and Lady's Fingers: Mr. Rackem was devouring slices of cold boiled beef with an appetite worthy of a coalheaver.

"I shall be happy, sir," he said, in a deep hollow voice, after he had satisfied the cravings of nature, "to give you all the information in my power on the delicate subject which you are now investigating. The spread of frivolity and immorality amongst Englishwomen of the present day is awful."

"Amongst the men, you mean," broke in Lamb. "Never have I known such a crop of broken hearts—such a series of outrages upon the delicate susceptibilities of female nature as at present."

"No, sir,—amongst the women. Oh! for the good old days when the robust acorn-fed help-mates—then help-mates indeed—of our Saxon forefathers, after days of severe toil, laid down their robust limbs by the sides of their loving masters, and were worthy of their confidence, and true to their own lofty calling. When I see a modern English lady of fashion mincing into her brougham—when I reflect upon those diminutive bonnets,

and those exaggerated crinolines, I give you my assurance, sir, as an honest man, knowing what I do know"—here Mr. Rackem brought down his clenched fist with a tremendous thwack upon the table—"I tremble—yes, sir, I tremble."

"Pooh, pooh, Rackem, it is the business of women to look pretty; that's their first duty in life, and what do you say to the clubs and the Derby days?"

"There is a Satire of Juvenal, sir,—," said Rackem.

Lamb answered in song with the rich mellow voice which I remembered so well:—

"Your Polly has never been false she declares,
Since the last time we parted at Wapping Old Stairs."

At this moment the door was thrown open, and a clerk announced:—

"Mrs. Barber."

The lady was good enough to recognise me as having been present on the previous day at Madame Larcine's. As she entered the room in the costume of the Divorcée, she turned her candid blue eyes in a playful, girlish way upon Mr. Lamb, and said:—

"Will this do, Mr. Lamb?"

"No, madam, it will not do. I am very confident that Madame Larcine never sent you that veil; and I tell you frankly, the crinoline must be smaller; but we need not dwell upon this point just now, for *JOBSON v. JOBSON* and *BOYCE* will occupy the whole day, and your most interesting case cannot possibly come on for hearing until to-morrow. We have plenty of business before us, however. You may not be aware of the fact, Mrs. Barber, but the most important part of these inquiries takes place in the office of the solicitor. It is not always right to tell Sir Cresswell everything. My friend, Dr. Dodge, has been good enough, for once, to sink the question of professional etiquette, and will be here presently; but meanwhile we can handle one of the chief points of the case—the incident of the hair at Brussels. I want Mr. Rackem's opinion as to the probable line of defence which will be taken on the other side."

Mrs. Barber settled her drapery in such a way as to display a very elegant little hand, perfectly gloved, and looking at us all, in a bashful manner, said:—

"It was when we were stopping at Brussels, you mean, Mr. Lamb. Oh! I am sure I shall never be able to tell the Court about that. Oh! no—never—never—but it was so cruel—so very, very cruel of Mr. Barber, for I had just been attending to him that morning;—he was rather poorly, and I had quite drenched my pocket-handkerchief with eau-de-Cologne, for his poor head was aching so."

"Headache, eh?" said Lamb. "What was amiss?"

"Oh! dear Mr. Lamb, you must not be hard upon poor Augustus—but he had been dining out the night before—if I must tell the truth—and hadn't come home till three in the morning. I had sat up waiting for him all night by dear baby's little cradle, thinking of other days: but of course, Mr. Lamb, you won't let anything be said about

that—when he started up and swore at me, and said, oh! such frightful, frightful words, and then he seized me by the hair, and dragged me about the room—and, let me see, what happened next?—I was so overcome.”

Mrs. Barber, I thought, looked towards my friend Lamb for a suggestion; but that gentleman maintained a rigid silence.

“Oh, yes, I remember: he took a pair of shears, or it might have been a large carving-knife, from the table—for I know there had been a dreadful piece of beef for breakfast—”

Rackem groaned.

—“and he brandished them over my head, and I thought he was going to kill me, and I implored him to let me say my prayers, and kiss baby once more before he did it; but he tore me about the room, and at last he said he knew I was proud of my hair, which was such a story—I only took pains about it, because there had been a time when he used to say he thought it pretty, and I wanted to please him, and now he would cut it off—so he dragged me back, and cut off all my hair.”

“What do you say to this, Rackem?” said Lamb: “awful cruelty!—they can’t have anything to say to that.”

“I could say a good deal to it,” replied Rackem. “I have been accustomed to deal with these incidents from the other point of view. Was any one in the room, Mrs. Barber, when this occurred?”

Mrs. Barber looked towards Lamb, but couldn’t remember. She didn’t like to speak about the maid who was carrying in the breakfast things.

“Did you scream, or call for help? because the alleged cruelty took place in a room in a public hotel, so that you could easily have summoned assistance.”

Mrs. Barber replied eagerly, but was checked by Mr. Lamb, with a “Not so hasty, Ma’am. Every answer is a chess-move.”

“I couldn’t have cried for help; for when Augustus was dragging me about the room my head struck against a console, and I fainted away.”

The two solicitors looked at each other.

“Mrs. Barber must not faint, Rackem; I seldom recommend fainting.”

“No—o—o! not safe, Lamb! it may be necessary to speak to other points of detail.”

“Oh! I don’t mean that I fainted dead away: I turned very sick; but I knew what Augustus was about—of course I did—else how should I know that he called me a horrid minx?”

Lamb smiled at her blandly.

“Your hair seems to have grown again very luxuriantly, madam,” said Rackem.

Mrs. Barber, in a playful way, stroked her remarkably glossy waves of hair, and smiled.

“Perhaps we had better shave the lady,” said Rackem; “it would produce an effect, I think, upon the jury, if at the critical moment Mrs. Barber was to tear off her wig in their faces, and burst into an agony of tears.”

“I’m sure I shan’t,” said Mrs. Barber, “cut off my hair to obtain all the divorces in the world: besides, it would be so naughty—so deceitful!”

Rackem raised his brows, and looked at Lamb.

After a moment’s reflection he turned to Mrs. Barber, and said:—

“How do you think, madam, that incident will tell when described thus? You must not be offended with me for putting the matter plainly to you, for it is better you should hear it from me, than for the first time from the counsel cross-examining you. What will the jury think when they are told that your picture of alleged cruelty is a total misrepresentation?—that your husband had taken you to Brussels for your own pleasure, because he always endeavoured to gratify your smallest whim?—that upon one occasion you were sitting in the most luxurious room of the most luxurious hotel of that famous city, he surrounding you, as usual, with every comfort you could desire;—that in a playful mood he stole behind you, having taken your own scissors from your own work-box, and cut off just the end of your hair, enough to garnish a little locket? I will tell you what, Lamb,” concluded Mr. Rackem, emphatically, “were I handling the point for the other side, I would produce the locket in Court with Mr. and Mrs. Barber’s initials interlaced, and with an inscription upon it, of

Thine—

Ever thine!

Brussels, such a date.

and I would give the locket to a clerk to wear for a few days under his flannel waistcoat, so as to take off the brightness of the gold. Observe, there is no corroboration on either side. Good morning, Mrs. Barber.”

As Mr. Rackem retired, the door was again opened, and the clerk announced—

“Dr. Dodge!”

GAMMA.

(To be continued.)

DIVORCE A VINCULO; OR, THE TERRORS OF SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL.

(Continued from p. 211.)



R. DODGE was introduced to all the party with formal courtesy by our mutual friend Lamb. I couldn't help thinking that Mrs. Barber soared a little too high into the empyrean—flapped her dove's pinions a little too hard—put on, in fact, a trifle too much of the angel for the occasion. She avoided and yet courted the learned civilian's glance—she made place for him by her side, and yet produced an effect as though Lamb had put a chair there, and forced the Doctor into it. There was such sweet confusion in her downward glance—so melting an appeal for protection in her candid blue eyes—that Dodge must have been a brute indeed to have resisted it. Mrs. Barber had evidently thrown Lamb overboard for the moment, and appointed Dodge “Guardian Angel in Ordinary.”

My friend Lamb did not appear in the least put out by this sudden revolution in the feelings of his client—nay, he seemed rather to regard her with increased admiration. For myself I confess that

although the suspicion suggested above did cross my mind for a moment when Mrs. Barber was placing Dr. Dodge in solution—one playful glance which she cast my way when the professional gentlemen turned round to look for some papers on the table brought me down like a struck pheasant, and quite reassured me as to her perfect sincerity.

After all—poor thing—what could she do? It must be heart-breaking indeed for an injured lady to be compelled to bare her tender breast to the gaze of two unfeeling professional men; to be examined as to the innocent endearments which she had lavished upon a wretch unworthy of the possession of such a treasure; nay—far worse, to have to tell how she was repelled with scorn by the brute when she had glided down to his side with healing on her wings. Oh! to be obliged, for her dear child's sake, to claim the protection of the law against the father of that blessed child—her own, too—fondly adored—idolised husband—the lover whose vows had sounded so honey-sweet in her virgin ears. But now! she who would have given her own life for his a thousand times—must tell the world what manner of man he really was! Oh! oh! oh!

I confess that, at this moment, the thought occurred to me that it would be well if I broke through the indolence in which I had been wasting too many years of my life. What if I should blaze into practice before Sir C. C., and carry balm and consolation to many a bleeding heart? Flora would, I am sure, approve of the idea, and I felt convinced that I could do the work better than—by Jove! Mrs. Barber is fluttering round him again—that beast, Dodge. How can Lamb employ such a fellow!

“We were speaking, Doctor Dodge, when you came in,” said Lamb, “of a particular incident in this distressing case? I mean the conduct of Mr. Barber, at Brussels.”

“Yes, you allude, Mr. Lamb, I presume, to the severance or abscission, or curtailment, of Mrs. Barber's hair. When I was drawing the allega-

tions I had not the particulars of the *res gestæ* before me in a satisfactory way, so I charged the other side broadly enough to let in the scalp, if Mrs. Barber can swear up to that point. What do you say, Mrs. Barber?"

"I don't think we can actually scalp Mrs. Barber," said Lamb, as his client appeared to be hesitating for a reply. "Not quite that."

"*BOGGLES v. BOGGLES*," continued the learned gentleman, "is the leading case on the point which has governed all subsequent decisions under this head of *ævitia*, or cruelty. It was there held that within limits the marital power extends to a control over the wife's hair during cohabitation. Mrs. Boggles charged that, upon one occasion, her husband cut off her hair when she was asleep—and, to use her own graphic, but somewhat trivial, phrase, when she awoke she was as bare as a barber's block. Boggles replied, that true it was he had softly, during the lady's slumber, removed a certain portion of her hair, which she was in the habit of wearing of an undue length, but that he had done so because it excited remark, and to avoid scandal. The court held that the husband was justified to the extent of moderate curtailment, but not to the length of a total deprivation of the wife's hair—not upon the ground that the hair is an ornament—for as to the propriety of certain ornaments the husband is the best judge—but because the total and sudden loss of hair might imperil health, and might therefore be well called *ævitia*. The learned judge let fall an *obiter dictum* upon that occasion, that it would have been otherwise had the scalp or cuticle been injured by a sharp-cutting instrument, for there was manifest cruelty—save indeed the lesion had occurred, *per incuriam*, or through carelessness, when it would have been well enough. But in *BOGGLES* and *BOGGLES* there was a *prima facie* presumption that such was not the case, as the amotion or removal of the hair had taken place during sleep, and, as the Ecclesiastical Judge shrewdly remarked, had the lady been cut or otherwise wounded on the head during her sleep, there was a violent probability that she would have awoken. But it was not so. Ah! Mr. Lamb, these cases were well looked into before the alteration in the system."

"Yes—Sir Cresswell would never have thought of that," said Lamb, not without a certain tinge, as I thought, of irony in his tone. I may here as well remark that Dr. Dodge was a somewhat portly elderly man, with grey hair, and a healthy red face, which seemed indicative of good, yet of careful living. You would have said here was a man who might not impossibly drink his two bottles of port a day, but who knew the value of shower-baths, rough towels, and early walking. He talked in a slow, emphatic manner, and had a way of throwing back his head and closing his eyes during the more involved portion of his argument; but he would awake from his apparent lethargy, and look you defiantly in the face while letting off his scraps of law-Latin. He actually rolled these about in his mouth like delicacies—they evidently smacked sweetly on his intellectual palate. During his exposition of the law, Mrs. Barber's remarkably red and satisfactory lips had

been the seat of considerable nervous energy; you would have supposed that her thoughts had been busy with her sad and desecrated Past, save at the moment when Dr. Dodge spoke of the barber's block as an illustration of the condition to which the lady's head had been reduced by the barbarous act of that monster *BOGGLES*. The nervous twitching was then an obvious effort to repress a smile; but Mrs. Barber quickly subsided into her more mournful, and now, alas! more usual tone of thought. It appeared, however, that she had thoroughly appreciated the gist of the learned civilian's argument, for she remarked, as soon as Dr. Dodge had concluded his exposition of the law:

"I might have done it myself, perhaps—indeed, of course, it was so—besides, I don't think—"

"What, ma'am!" said Lamb. "Give us the facts: it is for Dr. Dodge and myself to judge of their value."

"I never said anything about it at the time, but, in struggling to escape from Mr. Barber, the knife with which he was threatening me certainly did cut me,—not that I think for a moment that he really intended my death,—but Augustus was so incautious. The wound bled very much, and spoilt a sweet little collar of Brussels point, which I had only bought the day before, because dear baby—"

"Never mind that interesting child just now—any scar left, Mrs. Barber?"

The lady threw back her veil, and gave a triumphant start—but in this she instantly checked herself and stared into vacancy, whilst her eyes filled with tears. I could not have supposed that any human eyes could have contained so much water without overflowing. At last down it came with a rush—it was a positive relief to me, and I am sure to the other two gentlemen also, when we heard her sob. Oh! for but one quarter of an hour's private interview with Barber—giving me just time to have a pair of boots made for the occasion?

"Mrs. Barber, be calm," said Lamb.

"My de-e-ear Mrs. Barber!" said Dr. Dodge.

For myself, I turned round to the window, and without shame to my manhood be it spoken, attended to my Adam's apple, which was feeling unpleasantly large in my throat. When I looked round again on the group, Mrs. Barber was holding Dr. Dodge's wrist tightly with one hand, Mr. Lamb's with the other.

"Oh! I'll never tell! Augustus, is it come to this? I'll never, never, never tell. You won't hang him, sir, will you?—besides. Oh! how can I save him? I shall go distracted—if it was not for my blessed, blessed child. No matter, I'll go to the foot of the throne—"

"It will be quite unnecessary, ma'am, I assure you, to give yourself that trouble. Sir Cresswell doesn't go the length you suppose, even in his sternest moods. Mr. Barber's neck is perfectly, and unfortunately safe."

"The more's the pity: a scoundrel who thirsted after a woman's blood—and such a woman, such an angel as that!" said I; but I was instantly frowned down by the two professional gentlemen. For this I did not care one rush, as Mrs. Barber turned upon me her blue eyes overflowing with

gratitude for my honest sympathy,—and, her nostrils distended, quite panted in her efforts to suppress her natural and very creditable emotions at the danger which, as she supposed, threatened her unworthy husband. Poor soul! what could she know about the differences in jurisdiction between a criminal, and a matrimonial Court of Justice?

"Hadn't you better leave me alone with the lady?" said Dr. Dodge, in a soft, soothing tone, like that of a surgeon about to commence an operation.

"No, sir, certainly not. I am in the habit of attending to my clients myself. Would you like a little sal volatile, Mrs. Barber? I always keep a quart in the cupboard, besides twelve bottles of salts, and a packet of stay-laces."

"Thank you, no, dear kind Mr. Lamb. Thank you, no—thank you, no." A change had evidently come over Mrs. Barber's mood, for she rose from her seat, and kept shaking the two gentlemen, who did not seem to know what to make of it, violently by the hand. I had sometimes seen my beloved Flora 'taken'—so could the better understand these sudden revulsions of feeling;—the female organisation is so sensitive—so delicate—by George, it won't do to trifle with it. I thought I might as well have a shake myself whilst they were being served out so plentifully. I confess, however, that even I was not prepared for the extent of Mrs. Barber's gratitude; for, after all, what had I done? Nothing, certainly, that deserved "to be remembered to the last moment of her sad existence!" In another moment she was quite playful, and it was pretty to see the infantine way in which she tore off her bonnet—the identical *chapeau-à-la-Cresswell* which Madame LAREINE had prepared with so much taste and discrimination. She then took out two little side combs, and let her hair float in disorder round her face. If the jury could but have seen her as she put it aside, and peeped out like a sweetly mischievous child, I am very confident they would have torn Barber into atoms, only allowing the foreman the privilege of the first kick. She then indicated to Dr. Dodge the spot which was the seat of the injury. That learned civilian put on his spectacles, in order that he might more clearly discover the mischief.

"Yes, indeed, Mr. Lamb, here is a well-defined cicatrix, or scar. See here, Mr. Lamb. Will you allow me, Mrs. Barber?"

That lady had folded her arms upon her breast, and smiled on him so meekly, that it went to my heart. In proper hands what might not that woman have been, and here were all her pretty ways to be commented on, and measured and balanced by these two rude professional men? Dr. Dodge gently enough—I must admit—put her hair aside; and, stooping down, blew upon her head—the vile grampus!—in order to secure an efficient parting. Mrs. Barber gave a little shudder, and looking up, archly said:

"O-o-oh! doctor, it tickles so! Oh, how funny!"

Lamb was examining the scar with the help of one of those large magnifying glasses which they hand to you in an engraver's shop to help you to a

sight of the finer and more delicate efforts of the artist. On the whole, I thought that the two gentlemen spent more time over the investigation than was actually necessary.

"Are you quite sure, Mrs. Barber," said Lamb, "that you never received any injury on your head in childhood—never tumbled down-stairs, or over a fender, or anything of that sort?"

"Oh! never, never, never!—dear mamma was always so careful of us" (here the poor soul began to cry again), "and would never let us out of her sight. There was never any accident in our family but one, and that was when little Alfred was playing at soldiers with us girls, and doing the Life Guards at Waterloo, and he ran the toasting-fork into Eliza's eye. Poor Eliza always had a cast in it afterwards till the twins were born, and then it got right again."

"Dear me," said Lamb, "very singular circumstance! However, there is the scar sure enough; and we may perhaps import it into the case. Will the other side call any of the old servants of the family, I wonder? Well, well, we'll think about it. Now, Mrs. Barber, let us go on to the other points of the evidence. You understand we are confining ourselves just now to the head of—cruelty."

"Yes, Mr. Lamb, I perfectly understand you, and Augustus was so very, very cruel!"

"Will you forgive me, madam, for impressing on you the importance of precision in this matter. I want to know when was the first, and when was the last, act of cruelty charged? Within what limits did the Respondent ill-use us? When did the Defence—if I may so express it—first show the cloven hoof?"

"You mean, sir, when Augustus was first naughty? I remember very well, for I was so astonished at it. It was within a week after our marriage. We were at Hastings, and he asked me to play at ball; and as we hadn't any ball, he asked me to chuck my purse to him, and he would catch it. I did so, and he put it quietly in his pocket, and called me a 'little goose,' and wouldn't give it me back, and I was so disappointed because I wanted to buy presents for him with it; but when I burst out crying, and told him this, he said he would give effect to my wishes in a more judicious way than I could myself."

"Your husband never had any money of his own, Mrs. Barber, I believe?" said Dr. Dodge.

"I never saw any: he used to tell me, before we were married, that he had a fine estate, although he didn't wish to mention it to my family, as it would be an agreeable surprise to them. After we were married, I kept teasing him about it—for I wished to see the castle of which he had told me so often—so one morning he said he would gratify me by showing me the title-deeds, and he brought down a long box—"

"The usual thing, Doctor," said Lamb, "a brace of billiard cues."

"Yes, yes, the usual thing," answered Dodge, as though the point wasn't even worth discussion. I confess I was scandalised at Mr. Barber's duplicity; but, of course, professional men do get hardened.

"And the last time, Mrs. Barber? You see I

want to fix the limits, and then to show that the *savitia*, or cruelty, was continuous."

"The last time, sir," said Mrs. Barber, "I shall never forget it. We were stopping at the Pavilion, at Folkstone: we had just come back from Paris, and I was very tired with the journey, for Augustus had insisted on my crossing that night—the stormiest night in the whole year—and I

had gone to bed, and fallen asleep, when I was awoken with a stifling sensation, and found my nose in flames."

"Your nose in flames, Mrs. Barber?" said Dr. Dodge. "Allow me to say that that is a very singular circumstance!"

"Ah! but it's true for all that. Augustus had rubbed my nose over with cold cream, and then



he had torn off a bit of my handkerchief, and cold-creamed that too, and then he put that on my nose, and set fire to it. I hope that's cruel enough; but he was so very, very unkind."

"I protest, madam, in the course of my professional experience I never heard of such a fact," said Dodge. "I can't get nearer it than MAPLESON and MAPLESON, in which case the husband had slit the lady's nose up with a pen-knife. This, if done with felonious intent, was obviously well enough, and would have brought Mr. Mapleson within the cutting and maiming statutes; but it was proved on his side, *aliunde*, that he was fanatically convinced of the advantages of the

Taliacotian operation, and did seriously intend the conversion of the wife's nose from a snub to a Grecian. He was examined according to the forms then in use amongst us at the Commons, and deposed that the snub-like character of the lady's nose had weighed upon his spirits for years—that he had brought her over to his own views—that she actually requested him to proceed with the operation, and that in pursuance of such request the alleged injury was inflicted. The Court decided that whatever might be said to such a transaction before another tribunal, it could not be pronounced to be *savitia* in an Ecclesiastical Court. Here was the husband intending the

lady's benefit—the lady consenting—the pretext colourable; at the same time, the presiding Judge let fall a strong expression of opinion that a husband should never venture to perform a surgical operation upon his wife, more especially when he was not *inops consilii*, but *magnus inter opes inops*. Had it indeed been the amputation of a limb under circumstances of great pressure it might have been otherwise; but nobody could contend that the change in Mrs. Mapleson's nose, from a snub to a Grecian, could not have been postponed until such time as regular professional assistance could have been secured. But I am far indeed from saying, my dear Mrs. Barber, that Mapleson and Mapleson goes the length of your nose. It can scarcely be argued, on the other side, that Mr. Barber intended an improvement in your appearance by burning it."

"Mrs. Barber's nose is quite a feature in the case," said Lamb, with a disgusting chuckle; but the lady soon brought him to his senses by the simple process of applying her handkerchief to her eyes. How could any one with a man's heart and feelings venture to joke at the sufferings of a distressed lady?

Lamb attempted to repair the mischief he had done by various expressions of a soothing character; and that which was, to me, a decisive proof of the vulgarity of the man's mind was, that he caught hold of her little hand, forced it open, and began tapping on the palm with all the ardour of a monthly nurse. Mrs. Barber was, at that moment, at least five degrees removed from the point at which such a method of treatment is available—though, indeed, it is doubtful if a man's rude hand can ever administer it with advantage. That blundering, though perhaps well-meaning, solicitor had better look to himself. It would not greatly surprise me if his ears were well boxed within the next thirty seconds, or Mrs. Barber may possibly become perfectly rigid, or else dissolve in a Niagara of tears. Of the three alternatives I should much prefer that her grief took the form of an assault upon Lamb—he is a stout fellow, and blows inflicted by that fairy hand could not hurt very much. Besides, he would have brought it on himself.

Tears won the day. Dr. Dodge and I exchanged glances which meant as plainly as glances could utter it, "Is the time come for thrashing Lamb?" But the injured angel stood between him and his fate. She took his hand quite affectionately.

"Oh! dear Mr. Lamb! I am very, very sure, you didn't mean anything; but I have undergone so much, and words and little fancies which are nothing to a stranger's eye put me so in mind of other days. I am sure I am so troublesome to you—why should you give yourself any more pains about me? I am sure it must be very tiresome to you—a perfect stranger—to listen to the story of my sorrows. If I have done anything wrong, or anything to offend you, I will ask your pardon on my bended knees. I won't go on with this business. I know—Oh, yes! I know too—too well that all Augustus wants is my fortune. Let him have it. I have a little money left, and I can go down to Poldadek by this evening's train—and I will creep into the house at night, and

steal away with my child—and I can live in perfect obscurity somewhere in London. Yes; I can take a house near Dorset Square, or some other low neighbourhood, and take in needle-work till I have earned enough to send my child to Eton, or buy him a commission in the Guards. Perhaps, Dr. Dodge, you will be good enough to patronise me, and let me make your shirts. Indeed I can do fine-sewing very nicely. Yes—yes! that will be best—let me begone."

"Mr. Lamb, you are much to blame," said Dr. Dodge, severely.

"Oh! don't say anything against my good, kind adviser. There, Mr. Lamb, give me your hand, and let us be friends. We'll say no more about it. I am sure you always mean well."

So Mr. Lamb was pardoned, and we went on with the business in hand. Mrs. Barber then gave us, as a third instance of her husband's cruelty, another scene that had occurred at Folkestone upon a different occasion, when Mr. Barber, with many opprobrious words, had accused her of showing her ankles as she got in and out of the railroad-train, and up the ladder from the steamer. The accusation, as Mrs. Barber observed, was perfectly ridiculous, because she knew perfectly well that her foot and ankle were not as well made as they might be. "Indeed," she continued, "it is very odd, but I was the only one of the Montresors who had ugly feet. Oh! if you had seen Eliza's foot and ankle. Gentlemen used to go and take their stand near crossings on dirty days just upon the chance of getting a glimpse of them. Mamma, too, has the Montresor foot to this day; but I always knew that I was not a Montresor in this respect. Now, if you'll promise not to tell," she added, smilingly, "I'll show you my foot, and you shall judge for yourselves what a story Augustus was when he said I could wish to show it. There, see how clumsy!" Mrs. Barber, as she said this, was good enough to indulge us with the sight of a foot which, if it did not prove her case, at least proved how humble-minded she was, and how poor an estimate she had formed of her own attractions. For the first time I understood the story of Cinderella. The thought occurred to me that I would request her to allow me to have a model taken of it, that I might use it as a paper-weight. However, Flora perhaps wouldn't like the idea;—so, on the whole, it was safest to say nothing about it. For the first time I comprehended the frenzy of which a friend of my own had been guilty. He saw one day a lady's boot in a dressing-room. The tender passion filled his soul—he caught it up—kissed it repeatedly—put it in his pocket—found out the lovely owner—proposed in three days, and was accepted. They have now been married seventeen years, and have two thumping boys at school, one of whom has just been put into the Georgics. I don't believe there was ever a happier marriage. My friend treasures up the marvellous boot, and swears it shall go into his coffin.

To proceed—another instance of her husband's ungovernable passions mentioned by Mrs. Barber, was, that on one occasion, when a bill of 1*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.* was sent in for a hat and feathers for the child, Mr. B. had declared that she was ruining him,

and threatened to send her home. Not satisfied with this, he had seized up the cat, which was asleep on the hearth-rug, by the tail, and, twisting the animal several times round his head, had finally flung the infuriated creature at his poor wife. Lamb suggested that perhaps it might tell upon the jury, if they were to produce a cat in court as the unwilling actor in this disgraceful scene, and he offered the services of the Office Cat—a remarkably fine tabby—for the purpose. "Mrs. Barber's maid, a remarkably intelligent woman, who had lived with her through all the struggles of her married life, would readily identify the cat—she was a most intelligent woman." Dr. Dodge, however, over-ruled the suggestion, on the ground that Sir Cresswell would never for one moment admit the cat as a competent witness, as it would be impossible to show that PUSS was aware of the sanctity of an oath. This was not the first time I had remarked that the remembrance of his dramatic career still exercised too much influence over Lamb's mind. He was always for striking off an effect, and producing a series of tableaux to the jury. The principle no doubt is a sound one, but it may be worked to death. So, despite of some faint mutterings on Lamb's part with reference to the Dog of Montargis, his valuable suggestion was put aside.

It next appeared, that very soon after her intermarriage with Mr. Barber, his amiable wife had been taken by him down to Poldadek to stay with his two elderly maiden sisters. It is only surprising that she could have retained her senses after the sufferings inflicted on her by these ladies. They may possibly have done it with the best intentions, but was it just—was it right to send her to bed at seven o'clock in the evening—to prevent her from wearing any of the clothes she had brought with her from London? It was so natural and excusable at her age to take pleasure in attire which, however elegantly conceived, was befitting her condition. Besides, why did they put her hair into curl-papers—though the pain of the disgusting operation caused her to shed tears, and she implored of them to desist—and the odious screws of paper kept her awake all night by scrubbing between her tender cheek and the pillow? Besides, they were always sneering at the Montresors, who were of an excellent family, and connected, on the father's side, with an Irish Viscount. Miss Harriet and Miss Jane Barber, however, held such trifles in small account, and were always sneering at dignities which Mrs. B. believed they envied in their very hearts.

Mr. Lamb ventured to call her attention to what he was pleased to term a very troublesome feature in the case—namely, a series of letters, or notes containing declarations of the most passionate affection, which had been found by Mr. Barber in his wife's writing-desk, and appropriated by that unmanly ruffian.

Mrs. Barber explained.

When she and her husband were staying at Brussels, Augustus had gone into society which had caused her great uneasiness. In point of fact she was convinced that he had fallen into the hands of a pack of gamblers. For a long time the poor wife had resisted his earnest solicitations to

receive these men; but, at length, overcome by his importunity, she had consented. The most noticeable man amongst them was a Comte ALEXIS DE CUBILLARD. "His appearance was well enough," Mrs. B. observed, "in fact, rather good-looking than otherwise, but those foreign good looks she detested." He was a notorious gambler, and the most noted pistol-shot in Brussels. He soon began to persecute her with his odious attentions; but as she would not listen to him—he wrote to her;—wrote repeatedly. If she showed these letters to her husband—there might be a duel, and Augustus might be consigned to a bloody grave on her account. If she destroyed them, and it ever came to light afterwards that such letters had been in her possession, it might be supposed that they contained matter which they had not contained. What was she to do? If Mr. Barber could have shown letters of hers to Count Alexis, it would have been another thing.

"Excellently reasoned, Mrs. Barber," said Dr. Dodge, full of admiration; "one would really suppose you had been brought up in the Commons. The Count's letters are only evidence against himself. You are quite sure there are no letters of yours which the other side might spring upon us?"

"Quite!" said the lady, with a smile of seraphic innocence.

"Very well. I don't think there's anything more to say," said Lamb. "With your permission, Mrs. Barber, Dr. Dodge and I will go carefully through the evidence in a professional way when I have had the honour of conducting you to your carriage. Mind, to-morrow, at half-past ten punctually—punctually, Mrs. Barber!"

"Will Mr. Barber be there?" said the lady.

"Oh, certainly!" replied Lamb.

"I will take care and be punctual!" said the injured angel, as she glided out of the room, with a sweeping smile at Dr. Dodge and myself, and left us standing there full of sorrow and sympathy for her and abhorrence for each other. GAMMA.

(To be continued.)

That is a settler, and I am fairly mobbed in the kitchen between Vélay and the lieutenant.

One day I ventured to suggest that we stood our ground at Waterloo, upon which the whole party in the kitchen (except Marguërite, who, dear girl, always takes the part of the oppressed, right or wrong, and who on this subject has some German tendencies), stood up, and for five minutes shouted at the top of their voices, gesticulating as if receiving words from their mouths into their hands and throwing them into my face. This was unanswerable. I shrugged my shoulders as they did when words failed them; but, next morning, when Vélay was calm, I asked him what they had said, and he informed me that it was a matter of history (French) that Wellington had actually commenced a retreat upon Brussels when Blucher came up and saved the day.

Although I would not allow my friends to ignore our army altogether, yet I could not but confess to myself that they were right to a great extent. The French army of a half a million is available to-morrow, and a conscription would give the pick of as many men as might be required to recruit it. When the Emperor declares war, he will not give us time to organise new regiments or to call out the remainder of the militia. There is no doubt but that the twenty miles of sea is as good as an army of two hundred thousand men at least; but suppose the Channel once crossed by an enemy, what have we to oppose to him?

It is asserted that we can bring into the field, on a point between London and the south coast, an army of twenty thousand men, part of which must be composed of militia. That is all.

The first thing that strikes an English officer is the slovenly manner in which French troops march and carry the firelock. Even in the streets of Paris they do not pay the music or drums the compliment of marching in step. Nothing appears to be required of them, but to keep the correct wheeling distance of the formation, and to carry the firelock on the named shoulder. An English militia regiment, after a month's training, marches more regularly, and has a better parade use of the firelock than the French Infantry. There is an apparent want of precision in their evolutions. In the wheel of companies the men do not circle round, but make a half face outwards and shuffle up until they arrive in succession in the new direction; and in deploying into line points are not placed for each company, but it is done on a distant point. But perhaps it is better thus to practise on parade what men will have to do in action. A captain with us has to dress his men from the front of another company, which in action may have already commenced firing. Among old soldiers, as well as young, firing is rather infectious, and when once begun, with or without an order, it is very difficult to stop, and they care very little what is in front of them.

French troops are generally described as being quick in reforming when thrown into disorder—a great quality—and as seldom being more irregular in their formations in face of an enemy than on parade; whereas we exact a precision at drill, which is thrown to the winds the moment we go into action. I have heard several old officers

LIFE IN A FRENCH KITCHEN. By C.

(Concluded from p. 198.)

Louis Vélay is very enthusiastic about the march to London. Like all his countrymen he ignores our army altogether, with the exception of a few regiments for our colonies, and the Guards which protect the Queen and the Bank of England.

"You have no army," he says, "you cannot bring ten thousand men into the field without leaving London undefended. So how can you gain battles on land?"

remark that our army has not recovered its discipline since the war in the Crimea (discipline is lost in a campaign—virtue seems to go out of men); and also, that we have lost a great deal of precision in our movements, perhaps in imitation of our allies in the Crimea; but whether we make it up by adopting some of their good qualities remains to be proved.

They really are good soldiers, and what is more, they are great campaigners; that is, whilst our troops are on the bare ground waiting for the commissariat, a French soldier is under cover of some sort, and with a few sticks trying to cook his own dinner.

The Duke, in his despatches, makes frequent allusion to this quality in the French soldier, and also to the power of a French army to maintain itself on the ground where it stands.

Winter is not the season for drill. Though I frequently walked to the *Champ de Mars* for the purpose of seeing troops at exercise, I was seldom more lucky than to meet a regiment on its "promenade" or weekly march into the country, or to see a few companies of recruits at drill, or the bugles of a regiment marching and playing at the double, which they do for twenty minutes at a time.

The only occasion on which I saw a large body of troops was at the funeral of the Duc de Plaisance, but they only marched from the Madeleine to the cemetery of Père la Chaise in an open column of companies. However, I could see that the principles of their drill and ours are nearly the same. We are more precise than they are, and they attempt a greater speed than we consider compatible with steadiness.

They have three degrees of march—*ordinaire*, *accélééré*, and *double*. The first is the usual pace in columns of march and manœuvre in heavy marching order, and also at funerals, for they have no slow step. The cadence is quicker, but the pace is shorter than our quick step.

The *pas accéléré* is a quick walk used on the march and in action when speed is required. The *double* is nearly the same as ours, but used for greater distances, and the men are practised at it, as horses are trained for a race. The two latter steps may be useful on occasions and for short distances, but I do not believe in their extended use during a campaign.

The great object in equipping a soldier is to enable him to maintain himself on his ground. For this purpose, besides his arms, ammunition, and accoutrements, he carries food for two or more days according to the occasion, a great coat or blanket, or both, according to the season, and his knapsack, which with us constitute "heavy marching order." Thus equipped, he is independent of the commissariat, and though he cannot run fast or far with the weight, he can hold a position, and maintain himself on his ground as long as food and ammunition last. Whereas a soldier in "light marching order," that is with only his arms and accoutrements, cannot maintain himself for a night, for he is driven back by his wants.

It is a rule in marching, that to enable troops to arrive at the end of a long march without strag-

glers and in an efficient state, ready to go into action at once, they must all march with the slowest. As soon as the slow men are over-paced, they fall out, and the longer the march the more the regiment becomes inefficient. Spirit may carry on an out-paced soldier for a few days, but his heart soon fails, as does the heart of a horse, when put into harness with a quicker and an easier stepper than himself.

We can pick regiments, but we cannot pick men. Officers do not like to lose their best men, and men cannot bear the sense of inferiority implied by not being selected.

A regiment of the hardiest and most active men are but men. They cannot all be of one age and of one constitution. The strongest fall sick, and when they return from hospital and are out-paced in the first march under a hot sun, they fall out and become stragglers.

When I see, or am told by a witness who has seen, a French division march fifteen miles in a broiling sun, in heavy marching order, and then march for three miles more into action at the *pas accéléré*, and keep their formation to the end, and have no stragglers, I will believe in it,—"*Mais il faut le voir pour le croire.*" I saw a battalion of Chasseurs de Vincennes, supposed to be the best of the French infantry, marching for some immediate purpose along the Boulevards at the *pas accéléré*. They came from the barracks at the *Château d'Eau*, and were then near the *Rue de la Paix*, a distance of about two miles, and a great many of the men were out-paced, and some of them already in distress.

Luckily for the respectability of the British army (which is all we are allowed by our allies to have gained in the Crimea), there is such a thing as the *pas accéléré*, for, according to French history, we were in a bad position at Inkermann, and as usual had already commenced a retreat, when the day was saved by a French division, which had marched a distance of six miles, from Kamiesh Bay, at this useful pace. But as the French claim the merit of every victory in the Crimea, and lay the blame on us when anything went wrong, their accounts differ not a little from ours, or even general history.

The French army bears another and a great contrast to ours. Their officers are soldiers by profession, and ours too frequently enter the service for amusement and temporary occupation. Many of the former have risen from the ranks, and there are but a few who have any means besides their pay; their hopes in this world are in promotion and glory; when they lose their pay as officers, they become waiters at hotels and cab-drivers. Whereas our officers have generally some private means, and either can or do purchase some, if not all, of their commissions. With their private fortunes, and the value of their commissions to fall back upon, they will not face a disappointment in promotion, or a bad climate, or even a disagreeable quarter. On the breaking out of hostilities, the first impulse of every officer is to rush to the seat of war; the second is to rush back again. After a few weeks of the stern business of real war, and there is nothing so matter-of-fact, and on the spot has so little romance as war,

our amateur officers cannot be kept at their posts. See the Duke's despatches, *passim*. When they cannot return home on duty, or on sick leave, or on private urgent affairs, they do not hesitate even to resign their commissions.

Hence the short service and want of experience of our officers, particularly in the cavalry. At the end of the Crimean war, several of the captains and the whole of the subalterns of some of the Crimean regiments had two years' service, and the casualties by death and sickness did not warrant such promotion and so much inexperience.

The French have a fine force of cavalry, there being at Versailles as many as seven thousand horses, which are of a wiry, serviceable description. Great pains have been taken to improve the breed of horses for army purposes. The men look well, and are counted efficient, but for some reason or other, the cavalry is not held in the same estimation as the other branches of the service.

A Frenchman is a poor horseman; he is not made for sitting on a horse; he has no hands, his whole weight is on the curb, and altogether he never seems at home on horseback. They have no school in France for horsemanship, like our hunting-field; and a light hand, and an easy seat are things unknown. As long as a Frenchman does not tumble off, it is a matter of indifference, whether his hands are near his horse's ears or his own. The last thing he thinks of is a ride into the country for the pleasure of the exercise, and he no more would keep a horse for that purpose, than an Englishman would a camel for his dog-cart. When he does keep a horse, it is for the Bois de Boulogne. There he sees the world, and what is more, the world sees him, his rose-coloured gloves, his gold-mounted whip, and his prancing barb; a wretched animal with weak hams, that comes from Algiers, but quite the fashion just now, having a long mane and tail. There he sits in his tight clothes, strapped down to his boots (straps in the second half of the nineteenth century!) and then comes an English gentleman, loosely dressed, and cantering along, at ease with himself and his horse. However we have a deal to learn from each other; and much as we excel as masters of a horse, we cannot compare with them as horse masters. They can give us lessons in general stable management, in their shoeing, in their veterinary art, and in kindness to their horses, and to the rest of the dumb creation. This is proved by the general condition of their horses, and by the fact that though most of their draught horses are entire, a vicious animal is seldom seen. Their coats seldom *stare*, though the climate is as variable, and in winter much more rigorous than that of England; and during the time I was in Paris, I never saw a painfully lame horse, even in a hack carriage, or one with a sore back. A French coachman and his horses are the best of friends—they know him well, and they are never so brutally treated as in countries which have a Martin's act.

But our neighbours are very kind to all the dumb creation. Even the little birds, such as sparrows and linnets, are protected by law under the plea of their being supposed to destroy the

caterpillars, grubs, and insects in the fields. The sparrows in the Tuileries gardens are quite tame; and so are the wood-pigeons, which with us are as wild as hawks. A man may be seen feeding them with bread. The sparrows light on his hand, and he throws them into the air with a piece of bread, which they catch in their beaks as it falls.

But I am running away from the French army. Not that I am afraid of it. Our men can do their duty as of old; and our officers, being better educated and drinking less, are probably not much inferior to, or less clear in the head than Wellington and his lieutenants. But if we are allowed to do so, we ought to rest contented under the stock of our old laurels. The fortune of war is a curious element in the chances of a campaign, and as we have everything to lose by a war, I would rather have any other nation for an enemy than the French.

* * * * *

The eyes of Madame Blot are red; she eats less dinner than ever. When Blot goes out at nine o'clock, she tells me that Alfred has passed his examination at last, and has been promoted to a regiment stationed at Lyons. While she is yet speaking Marguerite enters. Her heart also is full, and I go out to let them unbosom. After waiting twenty minutes at the corner, I meet Marguerite going home. It is a beautiful night, and we walk along the Boulevards, which are full of people. Something has happened. The shop has never been a good business, there is a difficulty about the rent, and she and her mother are going back to Strasbourg. I could have assisted them with a little, but only a little, and I am therefore greatly relieved by her saying the difficulty is eleven hundred francs—a sum far beyond me—and that it falls upon a rich old uncle at Strasbourg, who is *caution*, or security, for them.

She is sorry to go, and I believe her: I am sorry to lose her, and of course she believes me. I gave her a small gold compass—not the one you gave me, Oh, Laura! to keep my heart straight, for that shall be found between me and my flannel when the winds have ceased to blow, but one that cost me four francs and a-half then and there. We are at the shop-door. Marguerite and I began by being lovers, but we elevated the sentiment and became the best of friends, and, for six weeks, the most regular of correspondents. I gave her a kiss, and never saw her again.

I could no more have stayed in Paris after the party in the kitchen had broken up, than I could have slept in a church after being at a wedding. So, next morning, I packed up my things, and having, as in duty bound, saluted Madame on both sides of the cheek and paid my bill, I called a *voiture*, and that night I was in Dieppe.

Sterne tells a story in his *Sentimental Journey* of a respectable-looking French beggar, who whispered something into the ear of every lady that passed him in the street, and every one turned round and gave him something. Sterne found that he had paid each woman a compliment.

I never believed this story. At Dieppe I had in French money the sum of seventy-five francs

and three sous. Not wishing to take francs to England, I entered an exchange shop on the quay. There was an old woman at the counter—a hard-looking, money-scraping woman. The exchange, she said, was twenty-five francs and four sous for each sovereign—nothing less—not a centime less. At this rate I could only purchase two sovereigns, and still be saddled with twenty-four francs. I explained the exact state of the funds—she was obdurate; I expended my best French in arguments—she was inflexible. The packet bell was ringing—I was leaving the shop. There were some violets in the window, white and blue. I thought of Sterne's story. "Would Madame give me two or three of those lovely violets as a souvenir of the most beautiful country in the world?" It was magic. She handed me the whole bunch and three sovereigns, and I now believe the story of Sterne's respectable beggar.

ADVENTURE WITH A TIGER.

AFTER some days' good sport in the way of "pig-sticking," i.e., wild-boar hunting, in which I am bound to say that my friend H—— and I maintained our characters as sportsmen of the first water, we moved our camp to a place called Belaspoor, where there was a bungalow built by a sporting Collector of the district, known by the soubriquet of "Tiger Tom," not because his disposition at all resembled that crafty and ferocious animal, but from the number of them he had killed.

One month every year—generally in April—Tiger Tom used to make up a party, and come to this bungalow, that he might pursue his favourite sport without having far to go in search of it. These entertainments were much enjoyed by his friends, for Tiger Tom was a facetious fellow, told capital stories, and always had an unlimited supply of Bass or Allsopp.

For some time back the bungalow had been unoccupied and neglected, Tiger Tom having been carried off, not by one of his opponents, but by an equally dangerous foe—jungle fever. Now and then it was occupied for a few days by sportsmen from the neighbouring stations, but very rarely; and it certainly presented a very desolate appearance as we rode up to it.

Long-neglected houses suffer in any country; but in this climate, with its moist soil, hot sun, and heavy rainy seasons, vegetation spreads with inconceivable speed, and the jungle had grown up to the very walls on the east and south sides. The house seemed to be stuck on the edge of a very dense jungle which stretched in the quarters I have mentioned, as far as the eye could reach; and one could not look at it without thinking of tigers and serpents, and all manner of wild beasts.

A number of huts—or rather remains of them—that had been erected for the numerous retinue of the collector and his friends, added to the sombre aspect of the place, for they were roofless and doorless, the villagers in the neighbourhood (there were none, however, nearer than a *koss*, or two miles), having doubtless carried off all available parts of them. They did not dare, however, to touch the house itself, having probably, a

wholesome dread of the Collector's myrmidons, a police-station not being far off.

Riding to our tent, which was pitched under a tree at some distance from the bungalow, we bathed, dressed, and had our breakfast, and then strolled over to take a closer look at the place. To our surprise we found it occupied, for, on our approach, a mongrel cur, half-pariah and half-bulldog, set up a furious barking, and brought out a European sergeant, his half-caste wife, and a couple of children.

He told us in an unmistakeably Irish accent that his name was Murphy,—that he was in charge of a salt-station some dozen or so of miles away; that he had come there that very morning for a little shooting, and had brought his family for a change and "diversion," not knowing that the bungalow was so dangerously near the jungle.

We dismounted and examined the place, and then the following colloquy was held:

"But how did you travel, Sergeant Murphy; and where are your servants and traps?"

"Och! yer honors, the natives (bad luck to the dirty spalpeens!) who drove the cart and attended my powney, were frightened for wild bastes, and wouldn't stay at no price; so I sent them to a village two miles off, where they're to wait till I find for them. Only that chap," pointing to a servant in the verandah, "agreed to stay till evening to cook for us."

"Well, my good fellow," I said, "it *does* look like a place for wild beasts, and I feel pretty sure your bullocks and pony, and perhaps the natives, would have been devoured by tigers if you had attempted to keep them here. I would recommend you leaving the place, too, without delay, as your wife and children are not safe even in the day-time,—there may be lots of snakes about these ruins."

"Oh, we'll take care of ourselves, yer honour; and I've a nate gun here, that'll astonish the wake minds of the cratur's if they come nigh us. I'll find yer honours a haunch of venison that I'm expecting to git, if ye'll condishind to accept it."

"Don't count your chickens before they are hatched, Murphy," said H——, laughing, "deer are not so easily shot in this thick jungle; and I would advise you to take care, for you may come upon a tiger quite as readily."

Sergeant Murphy declared he was not afraid, but we would not leave him without a promise—his wife joining her entreaties to ours—that he would keep very near the house and on the skirts of the jungle.

At dinner-time we sent over some things to help out the commissariat of the sergeant and his family, which we suspected would not be superabundant.

On looking out just before going to bed, I saw a light glimmering in the bungalow, which was about a quarter of a mile distant, but there was no sound to disturb the still night.

After paying a visit to our horses, and warning the saises and grass-cutters to watch by turns, and keep up a good fire (the materials for which had been collected in the afternoon), in case of nocturnal visits, we turned in.

It must have been some two or three hours after that I was awake by the call of "Sahib! Sahib!" just outside the canvas near which I lay, and on my rousing myself sufficiently to remember where I was, for I was far away in my dreams, I recognised the voice of Kurreem Bux, Selim's sais, "There must be something wrong at the bungalow, sir, for I hear shouting as if for assistance."

H— was by this time sitting up in his bed, listening, and we simultaneously jumped up and hurriedly dressed, ordering the lantern to be got ready. Snatching up our double-barrelled guns, which were always kept ready loaded with ball, we hurried towards the bungalow, followed by some of our people, one of whom led the way with the lantern, for there was no moon, and the light of the stars rather confused than aided us.

We were at no loss for the direction to go in, for the shouting of our friend Murphy guided us, and we were soon near enough to hear him say in his broadest brogue, but with some agitation in his tongue:

"Hallow, gintlemen, will ye come and kill the teeger that's got into the house; we'll all be murdered and aten enthirely."

Alarmed as we really were at this, we could scarcely refrain from laughing at the odd accents and speech of Murphy, but calling out that we were coming, we ran on, not without some dread, however, lest we should come suddenly upon the animal, which we supposed, of course, to be outside the house (and not in) as stated by the sergeant.

On the side that we approached there was no jungle, nor was there any verandah to the house. The light of the lantern enabled us to see that there was a venetian door closed, and on one side of it a small round hole such as is common in bath-rooms to admit air and light. It was from this aperture the voice of Murphy came, and we could just distinguish his hairy visage half through it.

On our inquiring where he had seen or heard the tiger, he said:

"Sure, and ain't the big baste at this blessed minute in our bid-room a cracking and scrunching the bones of poor Kerry, and only a thin door betwene us, and the wife and the childer like to die from fright."

"How did he get in?"

"Oh, I'll till ye all about it in good time if ye'll only shoot the baste; but if ye don't make haste, he'll be ating us, and thin I can't till ye at all, at all."

"But how are we to do that? Is there another door like this on the opposite side?"

"Yis; but it's my belaiif the big divil has shut to the door with his tail, whilst whisking about after poor Kerry—pace be to his manes:—or else his manners, may be, will have taught him to close the door politely after him: anywise, it's my imprission he can't git out agin."

Wondering at the Irish love of joking even in such extremity, H— and I consulted what we should do. Listening at the closed door, we could distinctly hear a large animal moving about in the room, and as we could not see the faintest glimmer of light through the chinks of the not very sound

jilmils (venetians), Murphy's surmise, that the opposite door was closed, appeared quite correct. We knew it was worse than useless to fire into the room before we could see to take aim, as we not only might miss the brute altogether, but should infuriate him, so that in his boundings he might burst open the bathing-room door, when the consequences would be fearful. So the only plan, evidently, was to wait as patiently as we could for daylight, when, if the animal remained in the room, we could soon settle him.

We had to wait an hour before the faintest streak of grey appeared in the eastern sky. I have watched anxiously at a sick friend's bedside—I have been myself sleepless, feverish, and tossing, longing for the morning light, with its hopeful, cheering influence—I have lain awake under the excitement of anticipated pleasure on the first hunting morning—but I never remember to have been so impatient as on this occasion.

In tropical countries the light comes and goes very rapidly, and there was soon enough for our operations after the dawn had once began. We opened one of the jilmils, and when our eyes were accustomed to the dim light discovered a huge tiger lying on the floor, very much in the attitude of an uneasy cat who has made her way into the dairy, and waits for the door to be opened to spring out. The noise we made, slight as it was, made the brute jump up and turn to glare fiercely at us: it was just the attitude we wanted. Hastily arranging which should aim at the head and which at the chest, we levelled and fired all four barrels. When the smoke had cleared away, we saw the grim monarch of the jungle stretched dead, and we shouted a triumphant paean, which soon brought Murphy and his family out, though the children screamed at the sight of the dead animal.

Murphy opened the door through which we had fired, and we entered and soon discovered the mystery of the animal's entrance and detention. The opposite door (which Murphy assured us he had fastened) had a bolt only at the bottom, the top one having fallen out, but there was no socket, or whatever it is called, to receive it. The bolt had thus dropped down *unfastened*, and Murphy thought it was all right, not perceiving the real state of the case. The dog—some small remnants of which were still unconsumed—must have gone out at hearing the noise made by the tiger in the verandah, and rushed back in alarm, followed by the hungry beast. The table which lay against the door, and kept it closed, must have been thrown down (shutting the door at the same time) either in the struggle between the tiger and its victim, or by the sergeant and his wife as they rushed, each with a child, into the bathing-room. Fortunately for the helpless creatures, the unwelcome visitor was too intent upon seizing the dog to notice them, so that they had time to escape into the only place of shelter at hand, Murphy in his haste and fright forgetting all about his gun, which rested against the wall in a corner of the room.

The sun was now up, and there was no fear of any more unpleasant occurrences for some hours at least; so, making our people drag the carcase out of the room, and obliterate the marks of the

struggle as much as possible, we left the Murphys, promising to send for their servant and conveyances, so that they might leave the place at once, even Sergeant Murphy acknowledging that he had had enough of it.

"All the gould of Injia," said he, "wouldn't

timpt me to keep the wife and childer in this drairy house another night: no, not if I'd be made guvornor of ould Ireland for it. And poor Kerry, if he could spake, which he can't, being aten up enthirely—letting alone his being but a dumb baste—would say the same." G. P. S.

DIVORCE A VINCULO ; OR, THE TERRORS OF SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL.

(Continued from p. 232.)

THE day had at length arrived when the cause of outraged womanhood, in the person of Mrs. Barber, was to be avenged. I had lain awake half the night, meditating on that amiable lady's wrongs ; and when sleep visited my feverish eyelids, even in my dreams, I continued to persecute her monster of a husband. I imagined myself to be addressing the Court in the lady's behalf, in the character of *amicus curiæ*, and so withering were my sarcasms—so full of tenderness and pathos my description of the agonised wife and mother—that Sir CRESSWELL, raising his hand, implored me to desist for a moment, and directed that the jury should be supplied with fresh pocket-handkerchiefs

—two, for the foreman—and immediately fell off himself into strong hysterics. The morning came at last—ten minutes to nine—I suppose over-tasked nature had been exacting an instalment of over-due sleep. Flora was doing her back hair at the glass, with a succession of fascinating little tosses of the head as the brush accomplished each sweep. I must have remained for a few minutes in contemplation of this—not unpleasing—performance, when memory vaulted once more into the saddle, and I recollected that there was work to be done before that day's sun had set. Barber, look to yourself!

The dressing-process was executed with wonderful despatch. In a general way I love to linger over this period of my existence; to trifle now with a book—now with a letter; and to add a storey or two to that castle in the air which has already attained the proportions of a magnificent pile indeed. Not so upon this eventful day. I felt I was assisting to form square in order to repel Mr. Barber and his unprincipled advisers. When it came to the turn of the shower-bath—although upon ordinary occasions throughout the winter months there is a certain exhibition of coquetry on my part, before I can make up my mind to give the fatal jerk to the string which hangs in readiness to pull down the Arctic regions on my warm, comfortable shoulders—upon this day I was so fully possessed with my subject, that I imagined I had thrust Mr. Barber into that ungenial hermitage, and without a moment's hesitation gave him the cold drench with savage glee.

"That will teach you—wretched man!—to shear off your poor wife's hair! Do it again, sir, and I will keep you there all day!"

I must in fairness add, that before the refreshing operation was over, I became quite aware that this was but the fancy of an over-wrought and heated imagination.

By a quarter past ten I was in Great George Street; and wished to hurry off with Lamb at once to the Court, although the lady had not yet arrived, lest we should be too late. Lamb laughed at my precipitancy, and informed me, that there was no such hurry, because it had been arranged that the Court was to take a short case—*THOPER v. THOPER* and *BOGGS*—before the great trial of *BARBER v. BARBER* was called on. *THOPER* and *THOPER* would probably occupy about half an hour. However, Mr. Lamb, in tender consideration of my inexperience, and supposing that it would be agreeable to me to be initiated into the mysteries of the Divorce Court, entrusted me to the care of one of his clerks, and gave me a bundle of papers duly tied up with red tape, and indorsed "*BARBER v. BARBER*." The deposit was a sacred one in my hands—not even the policeman with the red whiskers should tear that from my possession. The clerk was charged with a message for Mr. Muddle, Q.C., in the robing room, a circumstance which was so far fortunate that we were able by a series of back passages to get into the Court without passing through Westminster Hall; and therefore without being compelled to face that band of outraged Mænads, whom I had seen but two days back waiting for wicked husbands.

This time all was easy. The policeman smiled

upon us, and the doors flew open at our approach. It would be a mere waste of time to describe at length the old Chancellor's Court at Westminster; but, for the benefit of the uninitiated, let me say, in a very few words, that it is not large—square in shape—with a gallery cut in a circular form—and a gas chandelier in the middle. There is a canopy and a bench with three desks for the Judges—the Judge Ordinary sits in the middle—on one side. Beneath their position is a long table at which sits a gentleman in barrister's robes; no doubt an official of the Court, and possibly the person whose voice I heard the other day, through the trap, reading out that impassioned appeal to somebody's "Adored Louisa." If so, I am glad to see that he has partially recovered from his cold. He is perpetually opening and shutting a despatch-box, and looks like a man who would be always losing and finding his papers. Beneath him again is a well, where sit the Solicitors, with their backs to the Judges and their faces to the Bar. On the same level with them, but facing the other way, are the Queen's Counsel, and the chief matrimonial gladiators from the Commons. Behind these, but slightly elevated, sit the junior practitioners who have devoted themselves to the honourable undertaking of promoting the domestic happiness of their country. Right at the back of their benches—divided from it by a species of "Fops' Alley"—and against the wall, facing the Judges, is the box for the jurymen in waiting. It would seem as though the desire had been to exclude the public as much as possible, by leaving very little room for their accommodation. Against the wall, to the left of the Judges, and forming one side of the well, is the box for the Jury who are trying the case. The witnesses are made to ascend three or four steps to the raised platform on which the Judges sit. A portion of this, between the seats of the Judges and the Jury-box, has been railed off into a kind of pen. If a gross man is under examination, he is shouted and growled at until he stands well forward in sight of the Jury; if it be a delicate and susceptible lady who is invited to impart her sorrows into the sympathising ears of the Court, she is blandly invited by the Judges to be seated at the end of their own bench, though always within the pen. As the dividing rail is very slight, a stranger who entered the Court for the first time would imagine that, as all four are seated in a row, and as, on the same bench, there are three elderly Judges and an extremely fascinating member of the opposite interest, the lady was sitting there as assessor or adviser of the Court. This is not so. What adds to the illusion is, that when the Judges are seated two heavy red curtains are drawn, which inclose them and the lady in their gorgeous sweep. Mr. Lamb's clerk was obliging enough to point out this fact to me, with the additional information, that no circumstance connected with the arrangements of the Court had given his "Governor" more trouble; indeed, he added, that my poor friend often lay awake for nights thinking how to get over the difficulty, which consisted in the fact that when the curtain was drawn the Jury were debarred from the privilege of scanning the face of the lady-witness under examination.

"You see, sir, Mr. Lamb is obliged," said this enthusiastic student of matrimonial difficulties, "Mr. Lamb is obliged to teach 'em how to take it out in sobbing, and then there's always the chance of their over-doing it when they once begin. More way with the jury—worse luck with the bench."

This appeared to me a very matter-of-fact and disagreeable view of the question; but as the young gentleman had been exceedingly obliging in pointing out to me the wonders of the Court, I thought it better not to insist with him on the propriety of greater earnestness in speaking of these distressing cases. Finally, he showed me the spot where my friend Lamb was in the habit of placing his injured client when the leading counsel was opening the story of her agony to the Jury. As it seemed only fair that the gentlemen who were to decide upon her fate should have the opportunity of observing her demeanour upon so trying an occasion, Mr. Lamb used to place his client in full sight of the jury during the opening address; whilst she herself was under examination she sate upon the Bench; then his usual habit was to place her by the side of the jury-box, out of ken of the jury, but in full sight of the Court, with general directions to stand up during the examinations in chief on her own side, but to sit during the cross-examinations, so that she could not be seen. When the Respondent's case was brought on, the process was reversed. The lady then retired from public view during the opening address and the examinations in chief, but revealed herself during the cross-examinations. There were, of course, many fine distinctions, when exceptions were made to these general rules; as, for example, if a maid had turned against her mistress, or the husband was hinting a suspicion at her perfect propriety of conduct, on which occasions my friend Lamb had often, and with success, practised the tactics of the great Lord Nelson. "Win all, or lose all," he used to say on such occasions, "I make the signal for the lady to rise, and let Nature have her way. Women are surprising creatures, sir. I have seldom known them to fail me at a pinch; and I've seen them many a time fling the oldest hands at the Bar on their backs like so many turtle,—when they had winning cards in their hands, too."

Lamb had evidently made human nature his study.

Whilst I was looking round, the barristers were hurrying into Court; and, situated where I was, I could not help gathering scraps of their conversation. I confess that, on the whole, I was considerably shocked at the levity of their remarks. One young gentleman, who, despite of his robes, appeared to me far too youthful to take part in the discussion of differences so serious, and so pregnant with the misery or happiness of families as these, observed to a friend that BARBER and BARBER was likely to prove unusually "spicy!" Could a look have brought him to a sense of his situation, and of the gravity of the interests concerned—he had it from me. Then the talk began to smack of the stables, for Mr. Barber, as it appeared, was connected with the turf. Then,

"what sort of looking woman was Mrs. Barber?" These irreverent boys would soon see, and learn to respect outraged innocence in the person of that injured lady. There was a striking difference between the appearance of the professional gentlemen who—to judge by the papers they spread out before them—had some share in the business in hand. The more dogged-looking and thick-set men were, as Mr. Lamb's clerk informed me, "importations from the Common-Law Courts:" the blander and more feeble ones "the old hands from the Commons, and wasn't it fun to see Sir Cresswell flinging them over." This young gentleman had an odd notion of fun. Who was that Q. C. who had entered and quitted the court half-a-dozen times, as if he was overwhelmed with business, and was trying to be in half-a-dozen places at a time? "That was Mr. Muddle, who was in THOPER and THOPER,—but, Lord! sir," added the clerk, "he hasn't got his foot in here yet. He's just doing the regular business, like the Doctors when they get themselves called out of church during the Lessons." At this moment there was a call for silence. The Bar rose, and the three Judges entered—here was Sir CRESSWELL at last. They took their seats—Sir Cresswell in the middle—and the business began.

After leave had been asked and given to "mention" a few cases, THOPER v. THOPER and BOGGS was called on. Sir Cresswell tried the case, and contrived to pour daylight in a very few words upon many points where the learned gentlemen concerned had thrown a thick haze over the proceedings. I always observed that a look of unusual politeness stole over the face of that learned functionary just as he was about to administer a body-blow to a gasping civilian, and he contrived to deliver it in a way that conveyed to your mind the idea that the recipient was quite enjoying the joke. I was told that his fault, as a Judge, was that he was apt to display impatience; but I can only say that I saw him put out but once, and that was when the learned civilian, who was conducting the cross-examination, asked a good many questions as to whether two eggs of which, as it was alleged, Captain Boggs had partaken upon a particular occasion were poached or fried. The point at issue was as to the identity of Captain Boggs. After this had gone on for a time Sir Cresswell certainly did observe, with something like a growl, "The question, Dr. Dolly, is not as to the identity of the eggs, but the identity of the Co-Respondent." To be sure the point about the eggs did not seem very material. On the whole, I could not help thinking that if I had right on my side I should be well enough content to leave my case in Sir Cresswell's hands.

But as for the particular case of THOPER v. THOPER and BOGGS, if it could be at all accepted as a sample of the ordinary business of the court, I am sorry for any gentleman who is, by his duty, compelled to sit and listen to such tissues of filth and abomination. If glasses of brandy-and-water had been served out all round, and the three Judges had lighted up three clays, and in the various intervals the gentleman at the table with the

despatch box had obliged us with a comic song, I can only say that the performances at the Divorce Court would have been nearer to the entertainments provided by Baron NICHOLSON for his friends on Field-Nights than anything else of which I am aware.

There must be an end of all things, and at last there was happily an end of THOPER *v.* THOPER and BOGGS. There was next a call for BARBER *v.* BARBER, and the moment for the struggle had arrived. But where was Lamb?—and where Mrs. Barber? As I whispered my anxiety to the clerk, he told me not to make myself uncomfortable, because the Governor upon such occasions was in the habit of introducing his client to this

Court, not without a certain solemnity,—besides, he pointed out to me that Mr. Battledove, Q.C., was in his place, and panting for the combat; and, as the young gentleman informed me behind his hand, “he was a regular good ‘un, and never went off at score.” There, too, was my friend of the previous day, Dr. Dodge, in the row behind the Q.C.s, ready to support his chief. He was supposed at the Commons to be ‘up to trap,’—but he was nothing here, only it “was always good to have a civilian to speak to the old state of the law.” Then there was a lively, pleasant young gentleman with curly hair—I could see the ends of it from beneath his wig—who was our third combatant, and I confess I was greatly gratified at his personal appearance,



but my gratification was sadly dashed by a whisper “that he knew the rigs of town better than most men.” So young!—he wasn’t above two or three and forty,—and so ingenuous!—but so he did good service in unmasking Barber, and displaying him in his true colours, I cared not.

On the other side, the leading champion was not forthcoming,—he was no doubt a monster,—but in the first row of barristers there sate side by side two gentlemen, with a superabundance of whisker—one of whom was Dr. Lobb, from the Commons; the other a Mr. Cobb, from the Welsh Circuit—who had undertaken the thankless task of defending Barber; but of course even the worst criminals have a right to be heard, as it is essential to preserve the forms of justice inviolate. The leading counsel on this wretch’s behalf was Mr. Shuttlecock, Q.C., but it was not probable that he would come into Court until such time as it was necessary to open Mr. Barber’s case, unless indeed

he could make time to look in during Mrs. Barber’s cross-examination. He was just then in the Exchequer, busily engaged in proving to the satisfaction of a British jury that a certain Mr. Aaron Levi, of London Wall, was the innocent holder for value of a bill of exchange which had been obtained for discount from the acceptor by a set of bill-sharpers, but of which, or of the money, he had never heard anything until the bill was presented for payment.

Whilst a profound silence reigned in the court, I saw Mr. Lamb coming in with Mrs. Barber on his arm. I am bound to say that the evidence of deep feeling on my friend’s face, whilst he was conducting the lady to her seat, was very creditable to him as a man. He was quite overcome with ill-suppressed emotion. Mrs. Barber’s veil—it was a very thick one—was down, but it was easy to see by the agitation of her manner that she was deeply impressed with the painful nature of the ordeal to which she was about to be submitted.

When seated, I distinctly saw her take her handkerchief from her muff, as though anxious to escape observation, and hold it under her veil. Poor soul! this attempt at concealment of her grief will not avail her now. She must nerve herself for the trial. Mr. Lamb descended to his place in the well, but almost immediately rose again, and stood for a moment as if in hesitation whether Mrs. Barber's distress might not so completely get the better of her, that his personal assistance might be required. He even so far forgot the situation of the parties as to take a bottle of salts from his pocket and request one of the two barristers—I think it was Dr. Lobb—who were sitting there ready to plunge their poniards into her tender breast—to pass the bottle to his injured client. With a look of apology to the Bench and the Jury, Mr. Lamb then resumed his seat. Mrs. Barber's maid took her place by the side of her unfortunate mistress.

At this moment Mr. Barber was pointed out to me by the clerk: he had placed himself in the back row of barristers, just behind his two hired gladiators—I suppose that he might give them hints how to insult and torture his poor wife with offensive and irrelevant questions. Then there were the two Misses Barber—the two old tigers from Cornwall, who had so wantonly and cruelly insulted poor Mrs. Barber just after her marriage. They sat side by side, close to Mrs. Barber, and so little was there about them of feminine delicacy that they had thrown their veils back, and were staring the Judges and the Jury in the face as bold as you like. Maiden ladies in such a place as this!—and to hear the wicked, wicked details of their own most scandalous and abominable brother's atrocious biography. A nice family this to have married into! There were some other persons besides who, as I understood, were witnesses; but of them it is unnecessary just now to speak. But what is Sir Cresswell about with that big volume of light legal literature? I hope he is going to pay attention to so important a case. Not a bit of it. He has thrown himself back in his chair with a pile of such volumes before him, and is obviously about to give himself up to an afternoon of intellectual recreation. What can this mean? I soon saw the state of the case. It was the Judge upon his right hand who was to hold the fate of poor Mrs. Barber in the scales of justice. He was a very old man, but seemed very gentle and good-humoured. In a few moments it became clear to me that his hearing was not as good as it need to be. Well—this is a surprise—I can't but say I wish it had been Sir CRESSWELL who was to try the case. He seemed to me like Dick Burton, who used to whip in for Asheton Smith, and was never known 'to have gone off at hare:' but it is now too late to look back—we must make the best of what we have got.

The formal and preliminary proceedings were then gone through, from which it resulted that Mrs. Cecilia Barber charged her husband, Mr. Augustus Barber, with infidelity to the marriage vow, and with cruelty. Upon the first point, Augustus, overwhelmed with the recollections of his own most guilty and atrocious conduct, offered

no defence; upon the second, he maintained that the charge was false; that, the slight peccadilloes involved in the first suggestion apart, he had ever been a patient, an indulgent, and a loving husband. We shall see.

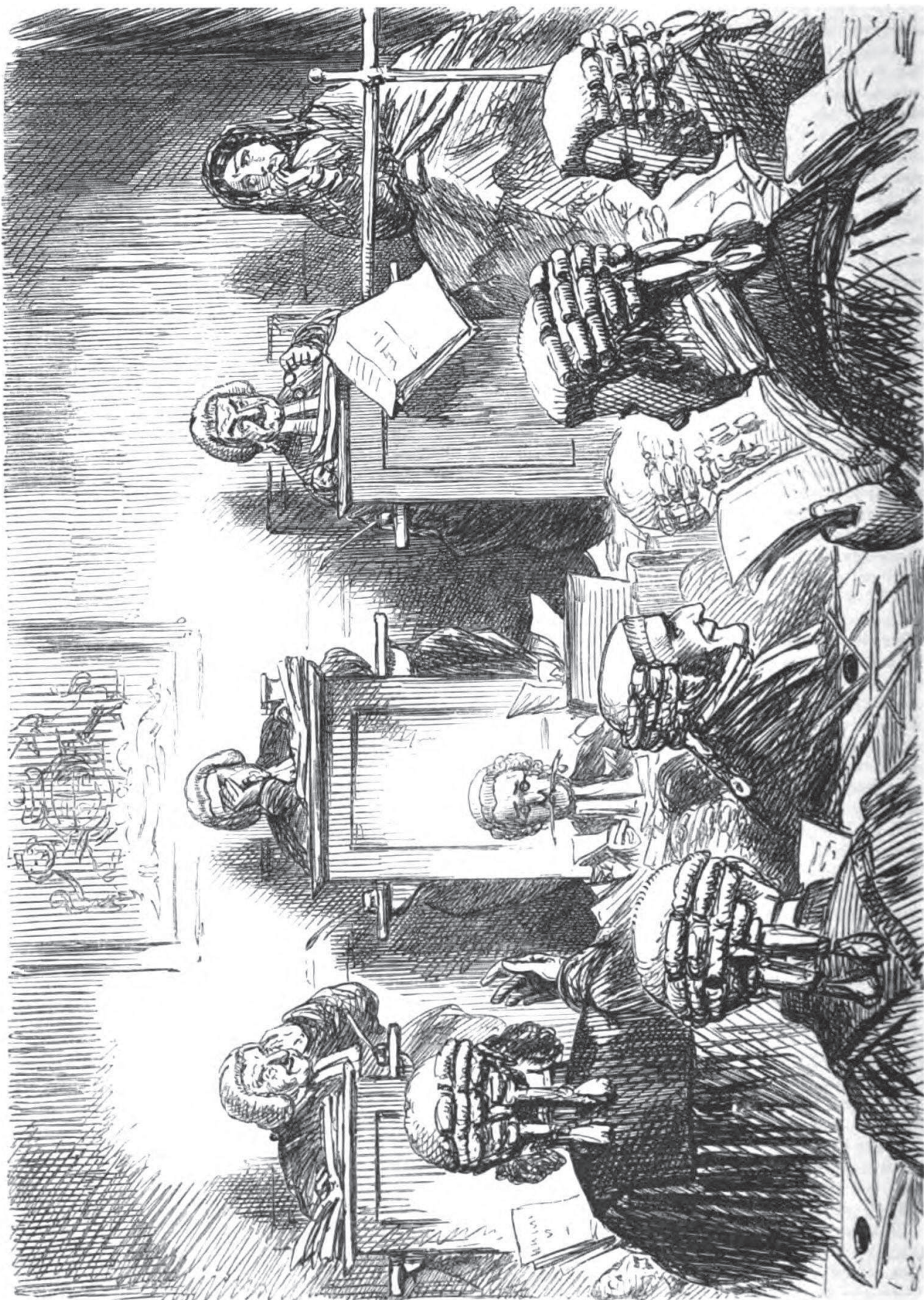
Mr. Battledove rose. You could have heard a pin drop in the Court. I may here as well say once for all that I was somewhat disappointed at the want in this gentleman's address of that burning, volcanic manner to which, in earlier days, I had been accustomed in the Common Law Courts in Breach of Promise cases, and such like. Mr. Battledove's tone throughout was distinctly that of a PATERFAMILIAS addressing twelve PATRES-FAMILIARUM in a Jury Box. The silence was only broken by a low sob from Mrs. Barber. He paused but for a moment, and then proceeded with his address.

"May it please you, my Lords and Gentlemen of the Jury: I feel that I must for one moment throw myself upon your indulgence. Do not, I implore you, attribute it either to a want of determination on my part to do the best I can for that most virtuous and unfortunate lady who has done me the honour this day of entrusting her cause to my unworthy hands; still less to the imperfect nature of her own wrongs—to any deficiency in those facts which it will be my most painful duty presently to submit to your notice—that I am thus enforced for a moment to pause at the outset of my address. You, Gentlemen, will not, I am confident, think the worse of me that the painful sight we have just witnessed has for a moment unnerved me, and rendered me—but for a moment, I promise you!—unfit for the discharge of the duty I have undertaken. But it must not be—"

Here Mr. Battledove paused, and beckoned to Mr. Lamb. He whispered a few words to that gentleman, and I inferred from the fact that he jerked his head over in the direction of poor Mrs. Barber, that he was sending my friend to the lady's assistance. Lamb walked over on tiptoe, taking great care not to disturb the proceedings; indeed, had he been about to kneel by the bedside of a dying father, his demeanour could scarcely have been distinguished by greater propriety. He stooped down to soothe the poor suffering angel—but it was all in vain—her grief would take its course.

"—This must not be, Gentlemen of the Jury, we have a duty to perform, and must not be diverted from our purpose even by so sorrowful a spectacle as this— Do not fix your eyes on my unfortunate client." (The Jury all looked at her.) "Do not attend to her distressing manifestations of grief. She is, I know, doing her utmost to repress them"—(Mrs. Barber here perfectly howled)—"for she has been well trained and tutored in grief. Turn your thoughts rather to the task of listening to a plain unvarnished tale of the wrongs she has endured, and if I can convince your reason and judgment—for that is all I wish to do—let your verdict to-day free her from the barbarity of her inhuman persecutor. Men may take different views as to the reciprocal obligations of husband and wife on many points, but no one, I think, will maintain that it is the

duty of the wife to submit to stripes and blows—to go in hourly danger of her life by night and day, without seeking, not for redress—for who can attempt to redress such wrongs as



these?—but simply for immunity from further violence."

At this point I observed Sir Cresswell was fidgetting with his glasses, and beginning to look

in a peculiarly bland manner at Mr. Battledove whilst he endeavoured to whisper something into the ear of the old Judge who was trying the case; but apparently without effect. Mr. Battledove's manner underwent an instant change.

"But now, gentlemen, for the facts of this case. We seek for an absolute dissolution of the most unfortunate union into which Mrs. Barber—then Miss Cecilia Montresor—was entrapped by the artifices of the unworthy Respondent in this case. Unworthy I may well call him, for that he is, upon his own showing. Whatever you may think of the facts which I am about to submit to you, you can't entertain a moment's doubt as to his character. He courts an adverse verdict from you on the first point, as the greatest favour you could bestow upon him. Rid him of his wife, and give him his wife's money—that's what he wants. The spectacle of her young cheeks sodden with the hot tears which his brutality has caused to flow is too much for his tender heart: like the Antonio of Shylock's sarcasm, 'Money is his prayer.' Give him but money and he will go away infamous and contented. And whose money, gentlemen?—his wife's money. The money that young and innocent girl brought with her as her dower—for, as I am instructed, the little that Mr. Barber ever had he made away with within three months after coming of age in infamous but unfortunate speculations connected with the Turf. It is his wife's money he wants—he is sick of her person—her heart and soul such a man was never in a condition to appreciate. But if you give him his wife's money, what will he do with it? Why he'll spend it with that distinguished French lady, who, for the moment, retains a hold—and he does not deny it—upon what he calls his affections. Oh! yes, take Ruth's portion, and cast it to Jezabel. Take Mrs. Barber's money—and give it to her abandoned husband. It will help him to satisfy his vicious desires—to continue his profligate career—or, as he himself would phrase it, 'to carry on the war.'"

Here Mr. Battledove paused for a moment, turned round, and glanced at Mr. Barber with an expression of paternal severity which was perfectly appalling.

"As I am instructed, Gentlemen, Miss Cecilia Montresor—then but seventeen years of age—was residing with her parents in Cadogan Place, when she saw Mr. Barber for the first time. I am not about, Gentlemen, to excuse, however I may attempt to palliate the conduct of my client, when I tell you that Mr. Barber forced himself upon her notice in the ride at Hyde Park. Her habit was—but with the full permission of her parents—to take her exercise there upon horseback every day attended by a groom. Mr. Barber corrupted the groom. They soon understood each other. They were kindred spirits, and the wretched man was induced to violate his sacred trust. I fully and freely admit that Miss Montresor ought at once to have given him in charge, when he began to persecute her with his attentions, or at least to have informed her parents of the circumstance. She did not so, and bitterly has she since rued her imprudence; but,

at any rate, whatever amount of blame may attach to her, I think no one will, for a moment, contend that Mr. Barber—a man of the world—a person whom I may well designate as an adventurer—was not infinitely more to blame. The result of this clandestine and most improper intercourse was, that Mr. Barber, by perjury, procured a licence—although the young lady was four years under age, and they were married in the church of Gobblegate Within. Mr. Barber then accompanied the young lady—now, alas! his wife—back to the residence of her parents—threw himself upon his knees before the afflicted mother, and craved her forgiveness and her blessing. Mr. Montresor had actually raised his foot for the purpose of kicking him out of doors, but was restrained by the tears and agony of his daughter—of that most unfortunate lady who, since that time has been so often the victim of his brutality and barbarous violence, and who sits before you this day a helpless woman indeed, unless you, Gentlemen—and I think I can foretell what the action of twelve Englishmen will be in such a case—interfere to protect her from further contumely and wrong. Mr. Barber, however, was forgiven at length by the afflicted parents, but upon the condition that Mrs. Barber's fortune should be settled on herself."

There was at this moment an interruption from a scuffle at the door, which was under the guardianship of the policeman with the red whiskers. Silence was proclaimed by the usher, but in vain. Matters indeed went so far that Sir Cresswell actually put up his double eye-glasses, and I trembled to think what might come next, when the upshot was that an elderly nurse-looking sort of woman made her way into court, and to Mrs. Barber's side. Mr. Lamb rose up, and from a glance which I intercepted between him and the intruder I could not,—perhaps I was wrong,—help suspecting that he had anticipated this little incident. Be this however as it may, he whispered a few words to Mr. Battledove, who continued:

"I must explain, my Luds, and apologise for this interruption. This is the person who received my client in her arms when she drew her first breath—who tended her—who brought her up—who cherished her—and comforted her in her youth, and has ever been ready to stand by her side in this the hour of her affliction. Mrs. Gollop, gentlemen, has nature's right to be here, but she has a technical right as well, for she is a witness in the cause. To proceed, Mr. and Mrs. Barber were married, and Mr. Barber was forgiven; but within a few days after the marriage he commenced the series of unmanly outrages upon her, of which she is here to-day to complain. These, for the sake of greater convenience, I will divide into two heads—*majora delicta*, grosser outrages—and *minora delicta*, lesser grievances, though grievances hard of endurance by a sensitive and delicately-nurtured lady who, in her childhood, had been the delight—the idol—the sunshine of her own family circle! I will now address myself to the category of *majora delicta*, or grosser outrages. Mr. Barber then took his wife down to the house of his sisters, in Cornwall,

where she received the most cruel treatment at the hands of those ladies. He took all her money, and spent it upon his own dissolute pleasures, threatening to take her life if she ever uttered a complaint to her parents. Well would it have been had he confined himself to threats! I am instructed that upon one occasion he struck her in her dressing-room with some heavy implement—that she fell to the ground, and retained the mark of the injury for many days; that upon another, when they were at Brussels, he seized her by the hair, flung her upon the ground, and dragged her about, concluding this scene of violence by cutting off her hair. Again, when they were at Folkestone, he saturated the lady's handkerchief with grease, and when she was asleep applied it to her face and set fire to it, thereby putting her in extreme danger of her life. I must also refer to another incident, which I am compelled to characterise as disgusting, which occurred at Folkestone. Mr. Barber here actually accused my pure and injured client of an indelicate desire to show her feet and ankles when getting in and out of the railway train. But enough of this! It was, again, his constant habit to lock her up in a dark room, because he had ascertained that my client has almost a childish fear of the terrors of the supernatural world; but surely something, in such cases, can be forgiven to the constitutional timidity of a woman. He has been known to lock up cats shod with walnut-shells, upon an occasion of the kind, and to draw pictures with phosphorus on the walls, in order to increase her apprehensions."

At this moment a clerk slipped a paper into Mr. Battledove's hand, who glanced at it, and continued:

—"And now, Gentlemen, I come to the lesser grievances to which I before alluded. These, taken by themselves, might be held to be nothing—mere trifles—the little cat's-paws of a summer's breeze which will ruffle—though but for a moment—the calm felicity of the best-assorted unions. You will, however, I think, in the discharge of your duty, take all the surrounding circumstances into account, and remember that the acts of which I am about to speak were the acts of a husband whose relations with his wife had been signalised in other more important particulars by tyranny and brutality of the grossest kind. Mrs. Barber—when she entered the married state, remember!—had 800*l.* per annum; Mr. Barber—nothing but his liabilities! Now, it would appear that Miss Cecilia Montresor—when the negotiations for a marriage were pending between herself and Mr. Barber during the course of her most unfortunate rides with that gentleman in Rotten Row—had expressly stipulated that, during the period of her coverture, Mr. Barber would not interfere with her, nor check her in her habit of purchasing, and wearing silk stockings—and no others. These, it was understood, were to be purchased with her own money. What will you think, Gentlemen, when I tell you that very soon after the fatal words were pronounced, which consigned the lady to his mercy—or, I should rather say, his brutality—he proposed to her to use as a substitute certain stockings which, as I am instructed, are known

amongst ladies and in the trade as—Cotton Tops! I cannot give you any precise information as to the meaning of the term—whether the foot or the leg of these hybrid articles is made of silk I am wholly unable to say—or it may perhaps turn out that the fabric is a mere mixture of cotton and silk after all. Mrs. Barber herself will, however, give you precise information upon this point—but, at any rate, she indignantly refused to comply with his request. Mr. Barber then replied that he would compel her to wear worsted stockings—stockings of the coarsest kind, calculated to injure and otherwise irritate the limbs of a delicate lady. For a time he did so—though he afterwards relented. Upon another occasion, he absolutely burnt some petticoats adorned with open and curious needle-work, upon which Mrs. Barber set great value, and insisted that she should wear petticoats of thick stuff, with work at the bottom not above three inches in depth. Again, he abstracted from her a little dog who was greatly attached to her—and, poor lady! she had much need of the attachment even of the brute creation!—and caused it to be stewed with button mushrooms, and served up for dinner: and it was not until she had partaken freely of the dish that Mrs. Barber was informed of the nature of her repast. But I had forgotten, whilst we were on the head of drapery, to mention to you that Mr. Barber had absolutely refused to allow his wife to make use of those articles known to all of you, Gentlemen, under the name of Crinolines. Now, I am not here, Gentlemen, to defend all the vagaries of fashion; but, at the same time, I think you will agree with me, that it is a little hard upon a lady not to be permitted to use the dress of her class. What was the consequence?—three of the leading modistes' houses in town actually struck Mrs. Barber's name out of their books, and refused further to imperil their credit by working on Mr. Barber's patterns. Whatever you may think of this, you will, I am sure, agree with me in condemning the profound indelicacy of a husband who, upon one occasion, actually put on his wife's crinoline outside his own dress; and, entering a room in which a number of their friends of both sexes were assembled, executed in Mrs. Barber's presence, and in the presence of their guests, a dance—known, I believe, as the Cachucha—whilst the poor lady's cheeks were burning with shame and confusion. But, Gentlemen, I will not weary you with reciting, at any length, details which you will hear more appropriately from the lips of the injured lady herself; and very confident am I that when you have heard her simple and artless tale, you will at once—under his Lordship's direction—conclude that Mrs. Barber shall walk out of this Court free from all further servitude—that she may lay her head upon her pillow at night without any longer apprehension that her uneasy slumbers may be disturbed by a curse and a blow. You will stand between that feeble woman and her savage master. You will remember that you have wives, sisters, daughters of your own: that you are men, and Englishmen, in a word, and will not sit quietly by and see sacred womanhood assaulted and outraged in the person of my unfor-

tunate client—if you can prevent it. Never in the course of my professional experience did I

leave a cause so confidently in the hands of a British Jury as this one."



Savage conduct of the Respondent.

So saying, Mr. Battledove sat down, but in a moment rose again, and said :

"Call Mrs. Barber."

With a few confidential words to Dr. Dodge, the learned gentleman then hurried out of Court.

somewhere, will free me for the day ; when a rumour, dark, horrible, and indistinct, spreads among the men that an explosion has just taken place at one of the great collieries of the neighbourhood, which we may call the Bungle Colliery,

BLOWN TO PIECES.

Nor, as mutineers, from the mouth of avenging guns—a fit reward for treason, murder, and worse—but in the midst of their daily work, without an instant of preparation, without a chance of escape, and without a thought of danger, in the midst of their country and ours—two hundred yards below the surface of the earth—in a coal-mine!

It is a fine afternoon in February, our men are all at their work, and everything is as dry, dusty, and parched as in a colliery district everything always is. I have taken my afternoon round through the acres of six-inch dust and cast-iron pipes, the clouds of smoke, and the clattering hammers and machinery which constitute the “works” at which I am employed; and I am looking forward to the six o'clock bell—yet three hours' distant—which, unless a boiler bursts, or a smash takes place

somewhere, will free me for the day; when a rumour, dark, horrible, and indistinct, spreads among the men that an explosion has just taken place at one of the great collieries of the neighbourhood, which we may call the Bungle Colliery, without being very wide of the mark in any sense. Where this rumour originates no one knows; how it spreads, or how much truth it may contain, is alike uncertain; only one thing seems pretty clear, which is, that something has happened even worse than the daily accidents of colliery life; and that “something” is said to be the sudden annihilation of two hundred human beings, whom the pitiless and unconquerable fire-damp has blown to pieces.

The hammering and the din of work ceases in our yard, as little knots of workmen collect to compare information; and when the rumour has gathered substance, and passed from mouth to mouth amongst them, jackets are donned, hundreds of people are soon on their way across the fields to the Bungle Colliery, near Burnslay. And I find I may anticipate six o'clock, and go home, for there is not one man left in the place to work or to be looked after. So I go.

Not much miscellaneous conversation that evening! No asking, as is usually the case, what is the news from London, or what the world

generally is about. Our world for that night is the black, stifling underground hole, where some two hundred men have just been slaughtered, not five miles from where we sit—for the rumour has become an awful certainty.

The next day I am one of some thousands who flock to this great black burial-ground. As I drive up a slope leading to it, I find the road almost impassable from the crowd who throng round me; and I notice how difficult it seems to be to realise the presence of wholesale death: for the crowd, as they press on—parties of colliers from neighbouring mines (and the Burnslay colliers are not a refined set)—laughing, swearing, and jesting, as they shamble along with the bow-legged stride which thin coal-seam men so often have, and which results from their being compelled from their childhood to work in and walk about passages only four or five feet high; young men and their sweethearts, the former with the slangy bright neckerchief common to the Burnslay district; taciturn old agricultural labourers; and shrill women, each with one baby at least;—all are evidently intent upon enjoying their “out,” and chaff one another as they go, and chatter, and buy gingerbread and oranges from the hucksters who—knowing rascals!—have set up their stalls and are reaping rich harvests from this unannounced fair. But scarcely one of all this crowd seems to have a thought left for the awful cause of the assembly, or for those that lie in such numbers beneath his very feet!

Yes; there are *some* who *feel*. As I pass to the summit of the hill, where, in the midst of a large circle kept clear by a body of police, are a few buildings, a large smoking hole in the ground, and some rough wooden frameworks, some wheels, and other machinery. I pass a long row of low plain cottages. In most of these the blinds are drawn down, and the doors shut; for in almost all of them is a widowed wife, a childless mother, or a fatherless child; and fortunate is that family which has not lost more than one of its most valuable members: for these are the dwellings of the miners; and those drawn blinds conceal the anguish of wives, mothers, and children, whose dearest relations have within the last twenty-four hours been blown ruthlessly to destruction.

As the noisy, merry, thoughtless crowd rolls me along with it, I catch here and there a glimpse of a face through the crevice of a door or window. God grant I may never see such faces again! Their expression is not that of bitter or noisy grief, or of helpless resignation, but generally of vacant white bewilderment. The shock has been too great for ordinary grief, and they are only now preparing to settle down into an intelligible sorrow which may weep and be consolable: at present they scarcely understand why they mourn, or why this great fair is being held round them. Poor things! they will know when they wake from their dream, and find their bread-earners dead.

By favour I make my way into the empty circle, and find how matters now stand. The pit is on fire! It is uncertain whether the men who were in the distant parts of the workings were killed in the great blast of the gas; but it is

certain that that blast has destroyed the ventilation, blown down the brattices, or partitions, and set the coal on fire, and that all *must* die soon, for no mortal hand can save them now. Human effort has done what was possible; and all honour be to those brave men who, shortly after the catastrophe, descended the fiery pit by the half-destroyed machinery, and saved the few scared stragglers, collected the wounded or unhurt at the bottom, and who, penetrating further into the mine, would have done more, had not the flames driven them, scorched and breathless, with their own lives in imminent danger, to the pit top again.

No escape now! All that can be done is to try and save the colliery from total destruction, and *pray* that the workers may have been blown to pieces at once, rather than reserved for the lingering fate in store for them, if alive.

To understand how matters now stand, I inquire into the nature of the underground workings of the colliery, and this is what I learn:—

I learn that the pit, at the mouth of which I stand, and by which the great engine raises and lowers the men and the coals, communicates at its bottom with the passages and levels (technically, boardgates) through the coal, and by which it is got. These passages extend, in different ramifications, for many hundreds of yards, some of them sloping *downwards* from the pit bottom into the lower side of the seam of coal, or “on the dip;” but the majority rising into its higher side, or “on the rise.” Some forty yards from this pit, on the lower side, is another one, where a powerful pumping engine keeps the colliery free from the water, which would otherwise rapidly accumulate.

A very few yards from the pit where I stand, and on the higher side, is a third, from which a stifling, sulphurous smoke is rising through the interstices of the iron rails with which, placed across and covered with clay, it is temporarily stopped. This is the ventilating shaft, at the bottom of which, when the colliery is in work, a furnace has been kept constantly burning, the heat of which causes a very powerful ascending draft in it, so that the whole of the air for the miners is drawn down the adjoining shaft and up this one by the force of the current.

But though these two shafts, or pits, are so near one another, the volume of air which is drawn from one to the other has to pass through the *whole* of the workings and passages of the colliery in its course. This is effected by building up a stoppage in the immediate and direct passage between the two pits, and directing the current of air through its proper course by means of partitions, or brattices, which are temporarily erected for the purpose where necessary.

Having learnt thus much, I begin to see how poor the chance of rescue became for the unhappy prisoners when the flames made way. For the force of the explosion has knocked down the main partition between the two shafts, and has set fire to the stables which are close to the furnaces. The consequence is, that the flame fed by the straw and woodwork, and by an unlimited supply of air down the main shaft (now in free commu-

nication with the other), roars up as though in a blast furnace, and setting fire to the neighbouring coal, sends up a column of fire sixty yards high, in itself a glorious sight, and which, the night before, had illuminated the country for miles round.

This conflagration had only been stopped by closing, as nearly hermetically as possible, both the shaft mouths; and the question now is, what further can be done. Alas! for the men below,—*nothing*.

The first great object is to extinguish the flame, and to do this we must of necessity extinguish *life*, too. No one dare say that all *must have* perished, and so no one dare take upon himself the responsibility of measures for extinguishing the smouldering flames.

And so we stand over one hundred and eighty-six human beings dead, or now perishing beneath us, and discuss the best means of killing those amongst them—if any—who are not dead outright,—for we *must* extinguish the flame; whilst round us some thousands of holiday-makers walk, and talk, and drink, and fight, each enjoying himself in his favourite way, and making the most of his excursion, while across the corn-field, black with the smoke ashes of the past night's conflagration, hundreds more sight-seers press on, "to see." Such is Burnslay life!

We determine at length—we who specially guard the entrance to Death—to try and stifle the flame below by steam (I need not say what beside we *may* do); but here hesitation and dread of responsibility creep in: and a compromise between a really useful course of proceeding and total inaction is made. Our engineers accordingly turn a jet of steam down the main shaft from the engine boiler, in the manner proposed by Mr. Gurney for the purpose of ventilation; but that ingenious gentleman would have been astonished to see the scale upon which we carry out his ideas; for instead of using as powerful a jet as the boilers can supply, we take one which has an aperture of about one quarter of an inch, and which discharged into the *downcast* shaft, must become utterly useless at a distance of a few feet from the surface of the ground. And so the flame of the furnace—and perhaps of life—smoulders on.

I return to my dust and weary, weary and dispirited. For days the great Bungle explosion is talked of to the exclusion of every other subject, and at length we learn that the fire having steadily refused to go out of itself, it had been determined to extinguish it by stopping the pumping engine, and allowing the water to accumulate, and also by turning a small neighbouring stream into the mine, which is accordingly done, and the extinction of the fire at last is effectually accomplished.

The work of re-draining the colliery is one of time. Some weeks elapse before it is sufficiently free from water to enable the workmen—picked men selected from the neighbouring collieries—to descend in search of the bodies of the lost, and for the purpose of clearing out the mine for re-working. What they see and do when they at

length begin their work, it is not pleasant to describe.

One of the best and sharpest men from our works is amongst those selected, and I often examine him on his return from work in the evening, as to the progress made. His story is generally horrible enough: the headless and unrecognisable trunks which he has come across, the limbs shattered and decayed, and the trunkless heads kicked against like blocks of coal, and taken up to be buried, all confused together, in the neighbouring village churchyard, and all his other such anecdotes of what he and his fellows have to do, make no pleasant recital; suffice it to say, that at length the mine is cleared out, the machinery repaired, the engines set to work, and the mine, with a new set of workmen, set again going.

And now, I ask, can such accidents be avoided? I do not ask this for the sake of the men themselves, for they are so accustomed to them—at least in this district—that they care little for them; but for the sake of society at large, and of the State, which is supposed to take some care of even the most insignificant of its subjects.

I say that here the colliers (like the historical eels) are too much accustomed to such accidents to care much about them when they happen. Let me mention two facts illustrative of my assertion. First, in a colliery within a very few miles of the scene of the above explosion—not more than three or four—and after its occurrence, a strike either took place, or was upon the point of taking place, among the colliers, because the proprietors insisted upon certain parts of their mine being worked with *safety lamps*, which these men always object to using, preferring more light even with more danger; and, secondly, in one of the collieries on which I was myself engaged, into which I took a visitor with me on one occasion, when he happened to inquire of the overlooker who accompanied us, as we watched a miner hewing away in his hole upon the solid mass of coal before him, whether there was any fire-damp there?

"Has't any gas in t'hoil, lad?" said the overlooker.

"Ay, there's a bit," said Blacky.

And our guide, unscrewing his safety-lamp, and making us stand back behind the brattice where the ventilating current of pure air was passing, applied the naked flame to the roof, and—bang! went the gas there with a loud explosion, whilst several jets from the surface of the coal caught fire, and were extinguished by the miner with his jacket, as our conductor screwed on his safety-gauze again. I never asked any questions about gas again, nor looked for any such experiments when under ground; but these incidents—especially the former—serve to show the recklessness of the colliers of the district.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the Bungle Colliery there have been, as everybody knows, two nearly as fatal explosions—those at the "Beeches" and the "Early Main" collieries; but what then? Why there is more work for those who are left, and higher wages. The widows of the slain are subscribed for by a sympathising public, and consequently very soon (with their dowries) find new

husbands, and all goes on well again until some new catastrophe horrifies people's minds for a few days, or till something else more exciting takes its place there.

A more rigid system of inspection appears to be wanting. Inspectors ought to visit collieries a little *before* the danger becomes so great, and not, as usually happens, just *after* some awful explosion. No blame to them though, if, as is said, their work is so heavy that they cannot possibly visit each colliery, in their respective districts, more than once in several months, or even years.

There is a very obvious remedy, if the collieries are more numerous than the existing number of inspectors—able men as they are—can possibly visit; and that remedy ought to be applied. It was whispered at the time of the accident that the Bungle Colliery was being worked by the proprietors in a dangerous way, and solely with a view to the extraction of as large a quantity of coal as possible in a short time, and this never could have been the case had proper inspection taken place in time.

I saw enough of coal-mining, and of the almost daily accidents which take place, and are never heard of by the general public, but which collectively amount to a large number, to rejoice that no lives were under my charge in a system so carelessly worked; and I at length left the dust and smoke, and din of a Yorkshire colliery district, glad to be away from a neighbourhood where every minute might bring the intelligence that almost under my very feet two or three hundred fellow-creatures had been shattered, scorched, and "blown to pieces."

E. E.

AN HONEST ARAB.



We had been on a fishing tour in the Highlands, and, *en route* to town, were idling a day or two in "the grey metropolis of the north." "Scotchman, Xpress, Merkerry, Fewzees, penny a hunder—this day's Scotchman, sir!" shouted a shrill-piped, ragged little imp at the fag end of a cold, wet, bitter day in October, as we stood blowing a cloud at the door of the New Royal in Princes Street.

"No, we don't want any."

"Fewzees, penny a hunder, sir; this day's paper, sir—half price, sir—only a bawbee;" persisted the young countryman of Adam Smith, as the market showed symptoms of decline, and threatened to close decidedly flat.

"Get along, Bird's-eye, don't want any," growled Phillips.

"They're gude fewzees, sir, penny a hunder."

"Don't smoke," Phillips, *loquitur*, whif, whif, whif.

"They're gude fewzees, sir, hunder and twenty for a penny, sir," coming round on my flank.

"No, don't want 'em, my boy."

The keen blue face, red bare feet ingrained with dirt, and bundle of scanty rags looked piteously up at me, moved off a little, but still hovered round us. Now, when I put down my first subscription to the One Tun Ragged School in Westminster, I took a mental pledge from myself to encourage vagrant children in the streets no more.

Somehow in this instance that pledge wouldn't stand by me, but gave way.

"Give me a penn'orth, young 'un."

"Yes, sir—they dinna smell."

"If the lucifers don't, the son of Lucifer does," threw in Phillips.

"Ah, I haven't got a copper, little 'un, nothing less than a shilling; so, never mind, my boy, I'll buy from you to-morrow."

"Buy them the nicht, if you please. I'm very hung-grey, sir."

"He'll give you his cheque for the balance, Geff."

His little cold face, which had lightened up, now fell, for, from his bundle of papers, I saw his sales had been few that day.

"I'll gang for change, sir."

"Well, little 'un, I'll try you—there is a shilling—now be a good boy, and bring me the change to-morrow morning to the hotel—ask for Mr. Turner."

"Give my friend your word of honour, as a gentleman, as security for the bob."

"As sure's death, sir, I'll bring the change the morn," was the promise of young Lucifer before he vanished with the shilling.

"Well, Turner," as we strolled along Princes Street, "you don't expect to see your brimstone friend again, do you?"

"I do."

"Your friend will dishonour his I O.U. as sure as—"

"Well, I won't grieve about the money; but I think I can trust yon boy."

"Can? Why, you *have* trusted him; and your deliberation savours remarkably of the wisdom of the historical stable-keeper, who began to think about shutting the door when—but the illustration don't seem to strike you as a novelty."

"Well, we'll see."

"Yes, wonders, but not young Brimstone and your money."

Next morning we were on the Roslin Stage to "do" the wonderful little chapel there. It is a perfect little gem, and its tracery, and its witchery, and its flowers, and fruits, and stony stories charm and delight the civilised eye and soul as fresh to-day, as they did the rude barbarians four long centuries ago. I never visit Edinburgh, but I go and see that little chapel at Roslin, and always endeavour to have a fresh companion with me, to watch the new delight and joy he receives, and of which I am a partaker too. But to return to the Roslin Stage. We were stopped near the University by a crowd congregated round some wretch brought to grief by the race-horse pace of a butcher's cart. A working man raised something in his arms, and, followed by the crowd, bore it off.

"It was over thereabouts, Phillips," I said during the block-up, "that Lord Darnley, of exalted memory, was blown up in the Kirk o' the Fields; to which sky-rocketing Mary of Scotland and the Isles, Regina, his beauteous, loving, and ill-starred spouse, was said to be a privy and consenting party."

"Nothing peculiarly interesting or uncommon in that episode of connubial bliss, I should think,

friend of mine. Blown up, my boy! One of dearest woman's dearest privileges—that's what you may look forward to when you pledge your plighted troth."

"Blown up by gunpowder, Charley, Guy Faux fashion, though. That's Darnley's garden-wall close by that public house, and that's the doorway of it built up."

"Quite right, too. No backways to the tap, say I. And Darnley be darned and blowed, too; but why don't Jehu handle his ribbons, and stir up his thoroughbreds. Now, then, one o'clock, the stage waits."

"Did ye say ane o'clock, sir," returned Jarvie, rustling his ribbons, after we had gone a little way. "I'm thinkin ye're gey weel acquaint wi' that hour, 'the wee short hour ayont the twal,' as Robbie says. Wad ye hae me drive on, regardless o' life or lim, and may be render anither bairn lifeless, or an object for life. Na, na; ane o'clock kens better."

"What's put your pipe out, Charley, you neither smoke nor speak. Has 'ane o'clock' put on the stopper?"

"I houp not, sir—meant nae offence, sir," said Coachee, who heard me. "Look ye, there's Craigmillar Castle, where puir Queen Mary spent a few o' her few happy days; and there's Blackford Hill, where Sir Walter says Marmion stood and saw

Such dusky grandeur clothe the height,
Where the huge Castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!

And that's Liberton, where Mr. Butler, in the Heart of Mid Lothian, was Dominie. And yonder's Burdie House; there's rare fossil fish and other creatures got at its lime quarries, they tell me. Ah! I've mony a time seen puir Hugh Miller, wha's dead and gone, oot here ladened wi' bits o' stanes that he ca'd fine specimens, and gae'd lang nebbed foreign names to. Burdie House, ye ken, is Scotch for Bourdeaux House, a place where some of Mary's foreign courtiers lived; and that village you see ow'r by my whip, was built for her French flunkies, and is ca'd Little France to this very day."

* * * * *

On our return to the inn, I inquired:

"Waiter, did a little boy call for me to-day?"

"Boy, sir?—call, sir? No, sir."

"Of course, Geff, he didn't. Did you really expect to see your young Arab again?"

"Indeed I did, Charley. I wish he had proved honest."

"Then, oh Lucifer, son of the morning, how thou art fallen!"

Later in the evening a small boy was introduced, who wished to speak with me. He was a duodecimo edition of the small octavo of the previous day, got up with less outlay of capital—a shoeless, shirtless, shrunk, ragged, wretched, keen-witted Arab of the streets and closes of the city. He was so very small and cold and child-like—though with the same shivering feet and frame, thin, blue-cold face, down which tears had worn their weary channels—that I saw at once

the child was not my friend of the previous night.

"Enter Antonio to redeem his bond!" Phillips, *loquitur*.

He stood for a few minutes diving and rummaging into the recesses of his rags; at last little Tom Thumb said:

"Are you the gentleman that bought fewzees frae Sandy yesterday?"

"Yes, my little man."

"Weel here's sevenpence (counting out divers copper coins), Sandy canna come; he's no weel; a cart ran ow'r him the day, and broken his legs, and lost his bannet, and his fewzees, and your fourpence-piece, and his knife, and he's no weel. He's no weel ava, and the doc—tor says—says he's dee—dee—in, and—and that's a' he can gie you, noo." And the poor child, commencing with sobs, ended in a sore fit of crying.

I gave him food, for, though his cup of sorrow was full enough, his stomach was empty, as he looked wistfully at the display on the tea-table.

"Are you Sandy's brother?"

"Aye, sir;" and the flood-gates of his heart again opened.

"Where do you live? Are your father and mother alive?"

"We bide in Blackfriars Wynd in the Coogate. My mither's dead, and father's awa; and we bide whiles wi' our gudemither," sobbing bitterly.

"Where did this accident happen?"

"Near the college, sir."

Calling a cab, we were speedily set down at Blackfriars Wynd. I had never penetrated the wretchedness of these ancient closes by day, and here I entered one by night, and almost alone. Preceded by my little guide, I entered a dark, wide, winding stair, until, climbing many flights of stairs in total darkness, he opened a door, whence a light maintained a feeble unequal struggle with the thick, close-smelling, heavy gloom. My courage nearly gave way as the spectacle of that room burst upon me. In an apartment, certainly spacious in extent, but scarcely made visible by one guttering candle stuck in a bottle, were an overcrowded mass of wretched beings sleeping on miserable beds spread out upon the floor, or squatted or reclining upon the cold unfurnished boards.

Stepping over a prostrate quarrelling drunkard, I found little Sandy on a bed of carpenter's shavings on the floor. He was still in his rags, and a torn and scanty coverlet had been thrown over him. Poor lad! he was so changed. His sharp pallid face was clammy and cold—beads of the sweat of agony standing on his brow—his bruised and mangled body lay motionless and still, except when sobs and moaning heaved his fluttering breast. A bloated woman, in maudlin drunkenness (the dead or banished father's second wife, and not *his* mother), now and then bathed his lips with whiskey-and-water, while she applied to her own a bottle of spirits to drown the grief she hiccuped and assumed. A doctor from the Royal Infirmary had called and left some medicine to soothe the poor lad's agony (for his case was hopeless, even though he had been taken at first, he ought to have been, to the Infirmary in the

neighbourhood), but his tipsy nurse had forgotten to administer it. I applied it, and had him placed upon a less miserable bed of straw; and feeling a woman, an occupant of the room, to attend him during the night, I gave what directions I could, and left the degraded, squalid home.

Next morning I was again in Blackfriars Wynd. Its close, pestilential air, and towering, antique, dilapidated mansions (the abode of the peerage in far-off times) now struck my senses. Above a doorway was carved upon the stone—"Except ye Lord do build ye house ye builders build in vain."

I said the room was spacious: it was almost noble in its proportions. The walls of panelled oak sadly marred, a massive marble mantelpiece of cunning carving, ruthlessly broken and disfigured, enamelled tiles around the fireplace, once representing some Bible story, now sore despoiled and cracked, and the ceiling festooned with antique fruit and flowers, shared in the general vandal wreck. With the exception of a broken chair, furniture there was none in that stifling den. Its occupants, said the surgeon, whom I found at the sufferer's bed, were chiefly of our cities' pests, and the poor lad's stepmother—who had taken him from the ragged school that she might drink of his pitiful earnings—was as sunk in infamy as any there.

For the patient medical skill was naught, for he was sinking fast. The soul looking from his light blue eyes was slowly ebbing out, his pallid cheeks were sunk and thin, but consciousness returned, and his lamp was flickering up before it sunk for ever. As I took his feeble hand, a flicker of recognition seemed to gleam across his face.

"I got the change, and was comin'——"

"My poor boy, you were very honest. Have you any wish—anything, poor child, I can do for you? I promise to ——"

"Reuby, I'm sure I'm deein', wha will take care o' you noo?"

Little Reuben was instantly in a fit of crying, and threw himself prostrate on the bed. "Oh, Sandy! Sandy! Sandy!" sobbed his little heart.

"I will see to your little brother."

"Thank you, sir! Dinna—dinna leave me, Reu—Reu—by. I'm com—comin', comin'——"

"Wisht! wisht!" cried little Reub, looking up, and turning round to implore some silence in the room. That moment the calm faded smile, that seemed to have alighted as a momentary visitant upon his face, slowly passed away, the eyes became blank and glazed, and his little life imperceptibly rippled out.

The honest boy lies in the Canongate churchyard, not far from the gravestone put up by Burns to the memory of Ferguson, his brother poet, and I have little Reuben at Dr. Guthrie's ragged school, and receive excellent accounts of him, and from him.

"What of your young Arab, Turner?" said Phillips, the following afternoon. "Was he honest, and is he really ill?"

"Yes, Phillips, he was an honest Arab; but now he is 'where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.'"

G. T.

DIVORCE A VINCULO ; OR, THE TERRORS OF SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL.

(Continued from p. 255.)

THERE was deep silence throughout the Court as Mrs. Barber rose from her seat, and stood for a moment like a frightened fawn at gaze, as though uncertain where to find refuge from her fell pursuers. Nor was the timidity which was part of her gentle nature at all dispelled, or even mitigated, when the Usher of the Court yelled out, in an imperative metallic voice :

"This way 'um. Please to come this way 'um ;" and then, in an under-tone as soothing, as though he were quietly cursing one of his own corns, but so as not to attract attention, he added, "Up them stairs."

"Ten thousand swords," methought should have leaped from their scabbards that instant, and the next, that rude unmanly official should

have been a thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing.

What ! summon this agonised wife, this fair being, to take her place before so awful a tribunal with as little ceremony as you would use in inviting a set of disgusting Aldermen, oozing with turtle and gorged with venison, to charge their filthy glasses at an abominable City feast. The very least that could be done would be to have a tall, mournful, gentlemanlike person in attendance, with a bag-wig and rapier—emblems of courtesy and justice—for the purpose of conducting these most interesting witnesses to their seats ; and if an organ had been provided for Sir Cresswell's

use, and a solemn strain had ushered in the appearance of these accusing angels, I think it would have been as well. Mr. LAMB half-rose, as though ready to fly to poor Mrs. Barber's assistance, had she lost consciousness at the outset of this trying ordeal. The three Judges even seemed moved to pity, and would, no doubt, but for the stern suggestions of duty, have tendered their aid to the unfortunate lady who was endeavouring to climb the steps to the awful pen. One moment more—and it is done ; the fatal rail is let down, and the Fawn—a captive !

The Usher with the metallic voice continued :

"Lift your veil ; take your glove off—the right 'and—please 'um " (this last phrase with a kind of explanatory growl) ; "the hevidence wich you are habout to give, &c., &c."

Mrs. Barber had only half-raised her veil during the performance of this ceremony, poor soul ! She had evidently lost the consciousness of her position, and rendered merely mechanical obedience to the stern commands of the Familiar of the Court. Her ungloved hand rested upon the rail of the pen ; the veil was neither up nor down ; obviously, she had not the slightest idea that she was the mark of every eye—but there was a sob. Oh ! Barber, Barber ! this is really too bad.

The kind old Judge who was trying the case had been for some time making little courteous waves with the pen which he held in his hand, and by telegraph inviting Mrs. Barber to take her place

at the end of the bench; but she heard him not—or heeded him not. Sir Cresswell even desisted from the perusal of the entertaining volume in which he had appeared to be absorbed, and entreated the lady to sit down; but in the agitation of her mind Mrs. Barber mistook his meaning, and steadily raising her veil, so as to uncover her whole face, revealed herself to the Jury. How ugly all the lawyers in Court appeared!—In how false a position were those wretched Jurymen placed! To do them but justice—poor fellows!—they seemed to be aware of the fact, and thoroughly ashamed of themselves. A young barrister in a figured shirt obviously registered, who was sitting near me, observed, under his breath, to another member of the profession, a tall, stout young man: “Well!—that something-or-other fellow Barber must be something-or-other hard to please;” to which his stout and learned friend replied in effect, “that a monotonous diet of partridges, too much prolonged, would, in the long run, inevitably produce satiety.”

However, the point before the Court was to induce Mrs. Barber to take a seat. The attempts made by the old Judge, and Sir Cresswell had turned out palpable failures; but it was clearly impossible to proceed to business until the lady had been prevailed upon to retire to the back of the pen, and take up position in a regular way. The two Judges had broken down—it was idle to think of physical force. Mr. Lamb, who might possibly have exercised some influence over his client, remained perfectly passive; there was not a trace of any expression on his features from which you could have inferred that he was concerned with the matter in hand. I suppose he was puzzled and at his wits' end.

The Divorce Court was at a dead lock; there was a perfect silence. There stood Mrs. Barber—a young Niobe in a sweet little bonnet and Indian shawl—staring at the Jury, and waiting for the axe to fall. Dr. Dodge next tried his luck, but to him Mrs. Barber paid not the smallest attention; she was no doubt expecting the blow from another quarter. Dr. Dodge had interfered in too pompous and self-sufficient a manner, and his position was simply ludicrous, as he stood in his place gesticulating away without a result. Finally, the third Judge, a fine-looking old gentleman, who had been fast asleep with his hands in his pockets, was aroused by the silence; and as he sat next to the pen he was able at last to attract Mrs. Barber's attention. The lady turned upon him, her eyes filled with an expression of reverential gratitude, and contrived, in her own graceful way, to envelope the three Judges, at the same moment, with a look of filial piety. The Judge who had last spoken was her father; Sir Cresswell, and the old Judge, actually operating, her two good, kind uncles, who would see her well out of the scrape. With the courtesy of three high-bred old gentlemen they continued bowing to her, while Mrs. Barber was settling herself in her place, and shaking out her drapery, and reducing it into order with dainty little touches;—her hair, too, had been slightly disarranged, and also required some share of her attention. It became necessary for

her to take off her second glove, in order to put matters quite to rights. From the moment Mrs. Barber had taken her seat everybody in Court seemed to experience sensible relief, and a kind of buzzing and a blowing of noses ran through the assembly, just as you find in churches when the attention of a congregation has been kept too long on the stretch under a particular head of terror or consolation.

Mrs. Barber having at length succeeded in arranging the disposition of her drapery to her satisfaction, and having also remedied the slight disorder in her “*bandeaux*” (these I observed were ribbed, or wavy, the effect was not unpleasing,) and having drawn her shawl around her in a way to produce the feeling of high shoulders, was now at leisure to attend to the business before the Court—indeed, so anxious was she that no time should be lost, that she directed towards the Bar a little look which meant “The victim is here—Strike!” even before she had finished putting on her gloves, (5 $\frac{1}{2}$), an operation requiring some degree of attention. The control the poor lady exercised over her feelings was very remarkable. Perfect self-possession had taken the place of the stupor of grief which but a few minutes before had weighed upon her tender spirits. As she glanced round the Court—you felt that it was converted into a drawing-room, and Mrs. Barber was the lady of the house. In point of fact, this was no longer Sir C. C.'s celebrated Divorce Court. What we saw was, *Mrs. Barber At Home!*

The duty of examining her in chief devolved upon Dr. Dodge, who requested her to give him her attention. Mrs. Barber with a sweet smile was graciously pleased to grant the prayer of his petition. I pass over mere formal matter, for otherwise these fleeting memoranda of the evidence in the great case of *BARBER v. BARBER* would run to intolerable length. I intreat, then, that any professional gentleman who may do me the honour of running his eye over these notes will believe that all formal proofs were put in, and in a word, “*omnia rite et sollemniter esse acta.*” I confine myself to noteworthy matter which may interest the public, referring the professional reader for technical points to the forthcoming number of that entertaining, and instructive serial, “*Mr. Whack's Divorce Cases.*” So after a few preliminary questions, answered with the greatest propriety by Mrs. Barber—the examination proceeded.

Dr. Dodge. “I believe, Mrs. Barber, at the time you were married to Mr. Barber you were under age.”

Mrs. B. “I was a mere child at the time.”

Dr. D. “Now, madam, will you tell the Jury your exact age at the time of the fatal event?”

Mrs. B. (After a pause, during which she remained absorbed in arithmetical calculations.) “I am not yet twenty-three—my birthday is on the fifth of May” (sensation in the Court), “and I have been married six years to Mr. Barber.” (Increased sensation, unfavourable to Mr. B.)

Dr. D. “In other words, you were turned sixteen, but not seventeen, years of age at the date of your miserable marriage with the Respondent?”

Mrs. B. "I suppose that was so; but, indeed, sir, it wasn't my fault. Mr. Barber seemed so fond of me, and said that it would be such an agreeable surprise to my parents—"

Dr. D. "Never mind that now, madam, unless, indeed, my learned friend, Dr. Lobb, desires to have Mr. Barber's observations on the occasion *in extenso*, in which case—"

Dr. Lobb declined this obliging offer.

Dr. D. "Now, madam, will you tell the Jury how you were married?"

Mrs. B. "Oh, yes, sir! I remember very well; I wore a white muslin with blue spots, and a leghorn with a sprig of white lilac, and I took Eliza's brown visite."

Dr. D. "I don't allude to your dress, madam."

By the Court. Stay a minute, Dr. Dodge. I don't think I have that last answer quite correctly. 'I tore a white muslin into blue spots, and a leghorn pig got at the white lilac, and paid Eliza a visit?' Surely that can't be correct. What had the pigs to do with Mrs. Barber's marriage? And who is Eliza? Mr. Battledore didn't open anything about Eliza—nor about the pigs either—and, besides, who ever heard of a leghorn pig?"

Dr. Lobb endeavoured to take advantage of this opening by a feeble attempt at jocularly; but it turned out that he was mistaken in his tactics, for the old Judge liked to have all the joking to himself, and told Dr. Lobb, somewhat peevishly, that if he had any technical objection to the question to make it at once; if not, not to interrupt the examination—so there was an end of him.

With some little trouble, and a slight interference on Sir Cresswell's part, this matter was put to rights, and the old Judge seemed quite happy and comfortable now he had something to put in his notes. The examination proceeded.

Dr. D. "Now, Mrs. Barber—that there may be no further misunderstanding, I will put the question in a more precise way—were you married by banns or by licence?"

Mrs. B. (too eager to give her husband credit whenever possible). "Oh! by licence, of course. I will say that for Mr. Barber, he wouldn't have attempted to insult me with banns. Indeed I know he went himself to Doctors' Commons for the licence. I must do him the justice to say that."

Mrs. Barber, poor soul, could not see what was obvious enough to the eyes of every person in Court, that her answer went a good way to establishing a case of perjury against her husband. The attempt to shield him was equally creditable to her, as though she had not been enticed into the pitfall dug for her simple feet by the crafty civilian.

Dr. D. "Now, Mrs. Barber, I must beg of you to direct your attention to the incidents that occurred before your marriage with Mr. Barber. You met him, I believe, for the first time in the ride in Hyde Park?"

Mrs. B. "Yes: I was riding there one morn—
en Mr. Barber came up to me, and said he
amma and papa were quite well."

Court. "Did Mr. Barber run by the side

of your horse, or are we to take it, madam, that Mr. Barber was on horseback too?"

Mrs. B. "Yes. I was a good deal astonished; but I supposed he knew the family; so I said that mamma's cold was better—but that poor papa had something with a Greek name which made him very uncomfortable, especially after dinner, and Mr. Barber said he ought to be cupped every day at four o'clock, and if that did not answer, the only thing was to try the Spa waters."

By the Court. "But, Dr. Dodge, all this does not amount to *servitia*. The issue is *servitia*. I need not tell you that."

Dr. D. "Well—well—madam, I need not trouble you for the particulars of that conversation. Let us confine ourselves to facts. What followed?"

Mrs. B. "Mr. Barber proposed to me to have a canter; and when we were going at full speed he asked me if I believed in first love, and the union of souls, and I was so confused, because my net had fallen off, and my back hair was streaming out, that I don't know what I answered: but I remember he said that it was 'wonderful!' and from that moment forward he would confine himself to four cigars a-day, and devote himself to my happiness."

In order to avoid the more tedious form of question and answer until we get to the *servitia*, the very pith and marrow of the issue to be tried, let it be sufficient to record that Mrs. Barber's evidence fully confirmed the opening statement of her learned counsel with regard to the manner in which she, a mere child, had been entrapped into marriage by Mr. Barber's machinations. It also appeared, that when the young couple, after the performance of the ceremony, had arrived at Mr. Montresor's house, and Mr. Barber was asking for the blessing, Mr. M. was so enraged, that he caught up the poker, and chased his son-in-law several times round the loo-table in the front drawing-room, down into the hall, and again down the kitchen-stairs into the scullery, in which place Mr. Barber at length succeeded in barricading himself. Subsequent negotiations, until the arrival of the family solicitor, were carried on through the key-hole; and Mrs. Barber was checked, with some little difficulty, in a description of the effect produced on the mind of the cook by the sudden and forcible invasion of her peculiar dominions. Suffice it to say, that after a while, thanks to the judicious interference of Mr. Roper, the solicitor, it was arranged that Mrs. Barber's money was to be settled on herself; Mr. Montresor was induced to lay aside the poker; and in due course the happy couple departed for Box Hill. It appeared, however, that even on the first day of that inauspicious union, Mr. Barber departed somewhat from his virtuous resolutions, and smoked all the afternoon "like a chimney"—a soothing process which he considered necessary for the restoration of his nerves, shattered as they had been by the form as well as substance of his first interview with the family of his amiable bride. From Box Hill the young couple had gone to Hastings, where occurred the disgusting incident of Mr. Barber's appropriation of the bride's purse.

Dr. Dodge. "Are the jury, then, to understand, Mrs. Barber, that, from the first, Mr. Barber appropriated your own money to his own use?"

Mrs. B. "Sometimes he lent me a little."

Dr. D. "A little—that is, of your own money?"

Mrs. B. "Yes; but he might have had it all. I mean when I had only myself to think of. But I should have been glad to have had a few pounds now and then to buy frocks for baby: and I wanted a few shillings once to have bought some merino to make a little coat for the poor child, and I would have sown on—the braid—myself when I was sitting-up at night for Mr. Barber; for, as he came in so late, there was plenty of t-t-t-time," (the poor lady's sobs were dreadful; she checked herself, however, and added, looking round like a Sibyl), "but I could never get a farthing!"

The effect produced on the Court by this terrible revelation may be estimated by the fact that poor Lamb—man of the world as he was, and no doubt inured to these harrowing spectacles—distinctly wept. The fact must have been evident to everybody present, as he was obliged to rise from his seat at that moment, and address some instruction to Dr. Dodge. I cannot absolutely say that Dr. Dodge cried also; I only know that he blew his nose very hard, and took his spectacles off, and proceeded to wipe them with a large green silk handkerchief with white spots. We talk of the weakness of women; but was it not strange that Mrs. Barber was the first to recover herself? She just passed her hand across her eyes, and then, with compressed lips and flashing nostrils, again offered her bosom to the operator's knife.

Dr. D. (Contending with his emotion, and thundering out consolation.) "Be calm, Mrs. Barber, be calm! I will do my best to get my part quickly over. Let us get at once to Poldadek. Very soon after your marriage, you went down to Cornwall to stay with Mr. Barber's sisters—maiden ladies, I believe?"

Mrs. B. "Yes, they are two old maids. Miss Harriet and Miss Jane. Miss Harriet is forty-nine, and Miss Jane forty-seven years of age. I saw the dates in the fly-leaf of the Family Bible at Poldadek."

I had frequently noticed the pleasant expression in the eyes of the puff-adder at the Zoological Gardens, when that amiable reptile is improving its mind by glaring at the British public through the glass of its cage. All I can say is, there were two puff-adders in the Divorce Court that day—the Christian name of one began with H, of the other with J. The old Judge did not make things better by having a long wrangle with Dr. Dodge as to whether or no the age of the two ladies was admissible as evidence; and certainly Dr. Lobb did not at all soothe the feelings of the two Misses Barber by arguing the question with singular pertinacity. When this little matter was settled, Dr. Dodge proceeded with the examination.

Dr. D. "Will you be good enough to tell the Jury, Mrs. Barber, what kind of treatment you

met with from your husband's relatives—from the two Misses Barber, I mean?"

Mrs. B. "They were very unkind to me from the first; but not so bad as afterwards."

Dr. D. "Not so bad as afterwards. Mention some facts, madam, if you please, to the Jury."

Mrs. B. "The very first evening I was there, Miss Harriet upset an ink-bottle over my mauve silk, and I saw she did it on purpose: it was all jealousy, for you never saw two such frights as they were. All the evening, too, Miss Jane kept telling me that no person could be said to be 'born' out of Cornwall; and, as for the Irish nobility, they were the very 'dregs'—that was to annoy me about papa's cousin, Viscount Poteen; and, at night, they would put me to bed themselves, and they came into my room in two dirty flannel dressing-gowns, with their own heads all stuck over with curl-papers, and they would do my hair in the same way—and they pulled my head about till I quite screamed with pain."

Dr. D. "But did not your husband—did not Mr. Barber, interfere for your protection? You told him, of course, what had occurred?"

Mrs. B. "Of course I did—but he told me not to mind the two old cats—that was his very word—for he had only come down to Cornwall to discount them. I didn't know what he meant; but, at any rate, I was to let them pull my hair out by the roots if they chose—so they bled freely—but I thought I was the most likely person to bleed if that went on."

Dr. D. "These were the occurrences of the first night of your stay at Poldadek. Proceed, Mrs. Barber—afterwards?"

Mrs. B. "Oh! afterwards things got much worse, though I confess I was to blame in some measure—but I was such a mere child at the time, and the old ladies had teased me so. One day they took away the keys of my trunks, and made me go to bed at seven o'clock because (playfully)—I knew it was very wrong of me—I had taken Miss Harriet's front and tied it to Fido's tail."

Miss Harriet started up like a tigress at bay.

Mrs. B. (With increased playfulness,—Mrs. B. carried the Court with her). "And then I took Miss Jane's false teeth—the whole set. Oh! it was very wrong of me—and slipped them into the tea-pot at breakfast."

Miss Jane also stood up by the side of her sister, and glared savagely at Mrs. Barber, but they might have been a thousand miles away for all the notice they obtained from that lady, who looked rather over them, just as if they were not there in Court bursting with venom, and proceeded with her self-accusation.

Mrs. B. "That was very wrong of me—very—very wrong—but I always said it was not my fault, if I knew that the new curate, Mr. Copeward, told Miss Jane in the breakfast-parlour, that he wouldn't have anything to say to her, because she was too old for him."

The Misses B. "Oh! my Lord, it's false—it's a wicked, abominable invention. Oh! you horrid, shameless, false, abandoned creature."

It was not without considerable difficulty, and threats of committal, and imprisonment, and much sternness from Sir Cresswell, and much blandness from Dr. Lobb, that these two ladies were induced to resume their seats. They only had eyes and ears for the object of their vindictiveness—a feeling which Mrs. Barber was far from reciprocating, as appeared by the touching expression of forgiveness in her countenance. It was beautiful to see the contrast between the infuriated, but baffled persecutors, and their tender victim.

Dr. D. "I believe, Mrs. Barber, that after leaving Poldadek, you went with Mr. Barber to Cheltenham?"

Mrs. B. "We did; and Mr. Barber took lodgings for us in Lansdowne Place, but he never paid for them?"

Dr. D. "Was it at Cheltenham that Mr. Barber struck you for the first time?"

Mrs. B. "It was. He was in his dressing-room. It was before dinner. We had had some discussion in the morning, because Mr. Barber wanted me to write home for some more money, which I declined to do; and when I went into the room, Mr. Barber was dressing, and he called me —."

Dr. D. "I am afraid, madam, we must have the very words."

Mrs. B. "I don't like to say."



Papa!

Dr. D. "Did he swear at you?"

Mrs. B. (With considerable moral dignity blended with compassion). "I am sorry to say Mr. Barber used always to swear a great deal. When he was not swearing at anybody in particular, he would swear in a general way."

Dr. D. "In a general way. But what did he say on this particular occasion?"

Mrs. B. "He called me—I suppose I must tell—a white-livered hussy, and said I was not fit to carry—indeed, I can't tell you the exact word, but something or other—to a bear."

Dr. D. "To a bear. Mr. Barber said you were not fit to carry something or another to a bear. What then?"

Mrs. B. "Then he struck me—O, so hard!—it hurt me so!—it was so unkind of him!"

Dr. D. "With his open hand, or his fist? or did he use some weapon, or implement?"

Mrs. B. "He had something in his hand, and he struck me with that."

Dr. D. "Was it a poker, or a bootjack?"

Mrs. B. "It might have been the bootjack; and I put up my arm to guard myself, and he made a great mark, and that remained for many days."

Dr. D. "Did he repeat the violence? Did he strike you again?"

Mrs. B. "Not upon that occasion; but it was just here!"

By the Court. "Ah! this is satisfactory, Dr. Dodge, we have got to the *sevitia* at last."

Mrs. Barber then assisted the Court in arriving at a precise conclusion by baring her arm up to the elbow, and indicating the exact spot where her brutal husband had inflicted the blow upon her. I have rather a feeling for a lady's arm, and I very conscientiously declare that the very last thing I should have dreamed of doing with Mrs. B.'s arm would have been to hit it with a boot-jack. However, there was violence proved. It appeared, as Dr. Dodge proceeded with the examination, that Mr. Barber, failing in his endeavour to induce Mrs. B. to write to her parents for addi-

tional supplies, was not satisfied with breaking and bruising her tender body, but actually had recourse to metaphysical terrors. He took her down to Herne Bay, far away from all human assistance, and hired a lodging there, at the stormiest season of the year. He then told her ghost-stories for two or three days, and used to take her up in a dark room, and set fire to saucers filled with spirits of wine, till the poor lady was brought into such a state of low nervousness that any imposture could be practised upon her with success. It was upon that occasion that he had turned two cats shod with walnut-shells into her bed-room, and by some diabolical contrivance had caused a luminous



The Two Old Cats.

inscription to appear suddenly upon the wall. It was conceived in these terms :

BEWARE! BEWARE!
Don't let the wife's purse
Prove in marriage a curse,
When she's taken a husband for better or worse ;
Pounds shillings and pence
Must not give offence,
For Augustus's love for Cecilia's intense !

Mention of this at first produced a titter in Court ; but when it came out that Mrs. B. had been so terrified by the trick that she had lost consciousness, and did not recover from the shock for some months, the first feeling of ridicule was soon changed into one of intolerable and burning

indignation against the brutal husband, who, not satisfied with inflicting upon his poor wife the utmost extremities of violence, had absolutely tampered with her mind's health, in order to convert her into a passive instrument for extorting money from her parents. From Herne Bay they had proceeded to Brussels, where they had resided for about a year, and here it was that Mrs. Barber's child was born ; and it appeared that the unnatural father was with difficulty prevented from forcing an oyster into the mouth of the newly-born babe, and sticking the end of a cigar between its little lips. Then there was the terrible incident about the cutting off of her hair, which also occurred at Brussels, soon after Mrs. Barber had recovered from the effects of her confinement. At Brussels Mr. Barber got involved again in

pecuniary difficulties, from which he was only relieved by the interposition of his angelic wife. What return he made her we shall presently see. They came back to England *via* Folkestone.

Dr. D. "And now, Mrs. Barber, I must question you as to a very painful incident. Did anything occur at Folkestone, upon that occasion?"

Mrs. B. "O, sir! you must not ask me about that. I can't tell—indeed I can't. O, don't ask me!"

This was the point known throughout the contention as "the incident of the ankles." Poor Mrs. Barber, upon being farther pressed, made two or three spasmodic efforts to speak, but utterly broke down. You could just distinguish such words as "*the babe*," "*my child*," "*O, cruel, cruel, cruel!*" There was, indeed, scarcely a dry eye in Court, so truly pitiable were Mrs. Barber's sobs, whilst Dr. Dodge, in a confidential way—which it is somewhat difficult to maintain in conversation with a deaf gentleman—endeavoured to explain to the old Judge that Mr. Barber had upon one occasion accused his amiable lady of having purposely exposed her feet and ankles to the bystanders on the railway platform at Folkestone. The three Judges, deeply affected, put their heads together for a moment, and finally an intimation was given from the Bench that it would be wiser not to push this distressing matter further.

Dr. Dodge passed on to the next point, with a sly cut at Dr. Lobb. Before putting the question, he turned in the direction of that gentleman, and said that for once he was sure "of having his learned friend" with him; whatever argument might have been raised as to the instances of *savitia* hitherto adduced, there could not, as he apprehended, exist any doubt that deliberately to set fire to a lady's nose was *savitia* in the highest degree. Now, as Dr. Lobb had certainly stood in one of the front places when noses were served out, the observation was unpleasant. The "incident of the nose" at Folkestone was then discussed, Mrs. Barber relating the story with the simple pathos of truth and sincerity. Dr. Dodge, as he saw the Jury took the point, dwelt upon it for some time, characterising it, as I thought justly enough, as "arson perpetrated upon the person of a British subject,"—a crime so monstrous, that it was unknown to the British law. In the course of the rapid questioning and answers, Dr. Dodge managed to obtain a hearing for the arrangements of the ancient Romans with regard to parricide. Indeed, the learned civilian was working up a suggestion for tying up Mr. Barber in a potato sack in company with a viper, a fox, &c., and easing him into the navigable river Thames off Westminster Bridge. He was stopped, however, by Sir C. C. in the midst of a very beautiful burst of eloquence, just as he had got into his stride.

There was some discussion as to whether Mrs. Barber's little pet dog, who had been—as she alleged—so inhumanly stewed and converted by Mr. B. into a *salmi de Fido aux champignons*, should be put upon the Judge's notes; but, after a very critical wrangle indeed as to whether the larceny of the dog could, in any case, be brought home to Mr. B. (pretermittting the question as to Mr. B.'s property in the animal in his marital

character, though, as Dr. Dodge suggested, it might turn out that the legal estate in Fido lay in Mrs. Barber's trustees), it was finally ruled that the poor little animal's ghost must howl unappeased on the banks of the sullen Styx. Dr. Dodge, having exhausted the resources of pathos, prolonged the contest for a few moments in a jocular tone, urging something about "No dog, no supper," which I could not quite catch. But it came to nothing. A lesser instance of *savitia*, or cruelty, was, that Mr. Barber, in the earlier days of her marriage, when Mr. Barber did occasionally accompany her in her walks, always refused to give her his arm, upon the unmanly and unfeeling plea that the lady's crinoline bumped against his calves. The incident of the burning of the worked petticoats gave occasion to a lively discussion. It appeared that Mr. Barber had actually, upon one occasion, opened the press or closet or drawers in which Mrs. B. kept her under-raidment, and taken therefrom certain petticoats adorned with beautiful needle-work, which he burnt in her presence.

By the Court. "Why, Dr. Dodge, this is an attempt to murder. Eh—eh?"

Dr. D. "Not quite that, my Lud, with all deference; we don't allege that Mrs. B. was actually wearing the petticoats at the time of the outrage."

By the Court. "To be sure that makes a difference—but I see that in the charges a good deal turns upon these petticoats. What kind of petticoats were they, Mrs. Barber?"

Mrs. B. "They were trimmed with Holy Work, my Lord, about quarter of a yard deep."

By the Court. (Writing.) "*Trimmed with Holy Work.* A sort of ecclesiastical vestment, eh? Is the Court to take it so?"

Poor Mrs. Barber here for the first time so far forgot her situation as to laugh outright. It did her no harm, however, with the assembly—for it showed what she must have been before her young spirits were weighed down by Mr. Barber's systematic oppression and tyranny. The contrast helped her. She proceeded to explain to the old Judge, "that Holy Work had nothing to do with sacred observances—but was so called."

Here a forward sort of middle-aged barrister struck in, in a dogmatic way as *amicus curiæ*, but with a strong Scotch accent:

A. C. "It's joost ca'd Ho-o-oly Wurrak, my Lord, because the wurrak is ho-o-oles!"

Mrs. B. (playfully.) "Oh, dear, no;—oh, dear, no! Not quite that. Oh, dear, no" (the Scotch barrister looked ready for a fight, but the lady waved him into silence with a graceful movement of her right hand), "it is called Holy work, my Lord, because the pattern is cut in the shape of St. Catharine's Wheels. You know, my Lord, those holes you gentlemen say that we ladies cut out that we may sew them up again."

Here followed explanations in the most courteous tone, and with the most extreme vivacity between the lady and the Court. I hope I am not of a suspicious nature, but I could not help thinking that, from that moment, the fountain of justice did not flow so clearly as before in the breast of that ancient Judge. However, what matter? Here was one of the cases in which feeling and justice were co-incident? When this dis-

cussion was terminated by the Court's putting on its notes whatever Mrs. Barber wished, by an easy transition we passed to various acts of *sævitia*, or cruelty perpetrated by Mr. Barber on his wife in consequence, as he alleged, of her extravagance in dress, but as it did not appear that the lady had ever spent above 200*l.* per annum on this object, and as she had brought 800*l.* per annum to the connubial chest, this surely was not much. It was beautiful to see the paternal interest which the Court now displayed in all Mrs. Barber's little comforts. There were some interlocutory proceedings, not recorded upon the Judge's notes, but as they were entirely conducted between the Court and Mrs. B., no one had a right to interfere.

By the Court. "Only 30*l.* a-year for gloves! Surely Mr. Barber could never have objected to that?"

Mrs. B. "Eight bonnets; two for winter, two for spring, *chapeaux à l'hirondelle*, or bonnets of passage; four for summer."

By the Court. "It might have been held that one *per mensem* was not an over estimate for a lady of Mrs. Barber's position and fortune."

Mrs. B. "And I'm sure, my lord, my bill at Hayward's, for cuffs and collars never exceeded 40*l.*; and then, a lady has so many little expenses that you gentlemen know nothing about."

Of course they have, poor things! The Court passed Hayward's bill without a shadow of objection; but then, remembering the sterner requirements of justice, let fall an intimation to Dr. Dodge, that it would perhaps be more regular if such points were spoken to by an Expert. Dr. D. bowed deferentially, and jumped at the suggestion; for, in point of fact, he had secured the attendance of Madame Léocadie Lareine, should the course of the proceedings render it desirable to produce her.

Dr. D. "And now, my Lords—and Gentlemen of the Jury, in conclusion, I will only question Mrs. Barber on one other instance of *sævitia* which was opened by my learned friend. Was there, Madam, any agreement or understanding between you and Mr. Barber, previous to your marriage, on the subject of the stockings you were to wear during coverture?"



(To be continued.)

Mrs. B. "There was."

Dr. Lobb objected that the agreement should have been in writing, and under seal. The Court glanced at Mrs. B., and put an end to Lobb.

Dr. D. "What was the agreement—in substance, I mean?"

Mrs. B. "I was always to wear silk stockings—and to pay for them myself."

Dr. D. "Did Mr. Barber perform his part—a negative one, I admit,—in the contract?"

Mrs. B. "He did not."

Dr. D. "Tell the Jury how he violated it. Quote the breaches, madam."

Dr. Dodge was speaking so triumphantly;—with each question and answer he was so getting upon a higher rung, that expectation now waited upon his every word. He was fumbling with his right hand under his gown.

Mrs. B. "He insisted that I should wear those odious Cotton-tops, and give him the difference."

Dr. D. "Are these the COTTON-TOPS?"

With these words the learned counsel pulled out a pair of lady's hose, and held them up emphatically in presence of the Court. I must say that, although the material might have been objectionable, the form was exceedingly pretty, and suggestive of the secret symmetry of the fair limbs they were intended to protect from the inclemency of the weather.

Mrs. B. "They are!"

Dr. Lobb was on his feet in a moment, and urged that the sample-stockings were void for want of identity. Mrs. Barber, however, admitted that they were "her size;" the Court was fascinated, and every eye-glass was directed to the shapely articles which Dr. D. continued to hold up in the public sight. All Dr. Lobb's objections were shattered like waves

against a cliff in the presence of these pleasing articles of lady's attire.

Dr. Dodge sat down with—

"Gentlemen of the Jury, that is my case, as far as Mrs. Barber is concerned," and he handed the stockings to Mr. Lamb, who folded them as reverentially as though they had been a sacred relic in silver paper, and deposited them in his breast pocket.

The Court adjourned to its chop and glass of sherry—and then Dr. Lobb was to do his part in the shambles.

GAMMA.

DIVORCE A VINCULO; OR, THE TERRORS OF SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL

(Continued from p. 277.)



RS. BARBER was let out of the pen whilst the Court was refreshing itself. Mr. Lamb waited for the lady at the bottom of the fatal steps, and offering his arm to her in a deferential way, conducted her to her seat. Nothing surprised me more than the appearance of perfect indifference, towards each other, which the two principals in *BARBER v. BARBER* contrived to put on during this temporary cessation of hostilities. For six years the one had been loving on against hope,—the other torturing his tender victim. What days, what nights they must have passed together! What words of bitterness and temporary reconciliation must have been uttered between them! Then there was Nature's soft but adamant link—that beautiful babe with the Barber eyes, and the Montresor “pobsie-wobsies,” or feet with astonishing toes; but all seemed now clean forgotten and out of their minds? Mr. Barber—as far as his manner was concerned—might have

been leaning over the rails in Rotten Row, discussing the demerits of a chestnut screw with his abandoned associates—Mrs. Barber might have been paying a graceful tribute of commendation to the beauty of a rival, or engaged in a daring analysis of the last thing in lace-falls, for any trace of emotion you could discover in their countenances. Madam Leocadie Lareine had come into Court, and now formed one of our little group near the Jury-Box, consisting of Mrs. Barber, her maid, her nurse, Mr. Lamb, and myself. Mr. Lamb now addressed the lady, but with a sort of sandwich-and-sherry manner, just as though he were speaking of the most indifferent matters.

“Mrs. Barber, be good enough to smile at me occasionally whilst I am giving you my last instructions, and see you take heed to them. I have that confidence in your strength of mind that I'll tell you exactly where you are—just precisely in the most dangerous position in which a woman could stand. For the next hour you would be safer in the bear's den in the Zoological Gardens, after a parcel of schoolboys had been irritating the bears by alluring them to the top of the pole with buns, and then depriving them of the anticipated encouragement to industry, than up yonder on that comfortable cushion. Be good enough to smile at me, as if I'd said something to amuse you.”

“La! Mr. Lamb!” said the lady, with an expression upon her face of intense amusement, just allowing her glance to fall for an instant on the two Misses Barber, and then withdrawing it emphatically, as though afraid of giving offence.

“La! Mr. Lamb, you don't say so!”

“You're sublime, Madam, positively sublime. You're the first woman I ever admired in my life. After we've turned Barber out of doors, if you'll accept me as a substitute, I can only say that I will take the earliest opportunity of tendering you my hand and fortune in a regular way. May I trouble you for another smile, Mrs. Barber?”

“La! Mr. Lamb, you funny old dear! What

a nice old lawyer you are! I shall never forget the trouble you have taken for me."

"Enough, Madam, I understand you. I was carried away by my feelings, and honest admiration for the unrivalled dexterity of that last glance. Look at the two ladies again—this time innocently—you would suppose them under the effect of drastic medicine; but enough of this. And now to business. Remember, Mrs. Barber, it was Dodge's business to hold you up; it's Lobb's business to trip you up. Not a single question he puts to you but has a trap behind it,—if he does his work well. Now, mind, the more he bellows the less is the real peril: only when he's horribly civil keep your wits about you. Don't forget, either, that you can be as positive as you like, if they haven't your handwriting to show against you, or nobody was by at the time. You may then trust implicitly to your own memory. I think I've taken the last precautions. I have shaken hands with Lobb—(another smile, if you please—thank you, that will do)—his hand's damp, so I can't think his cross-examination can come to much. And I've directed my clerk to see that lots of pens and paper should be placed before Mr. Barber. If he only takes to prompting Lobb, and Lobb is idiot enough to listen to him, under Providence, we're safe. Another smile, if you please; thank you. If you see any such manœuvres going on, swear hard, my dear madam, swear hard—they've got no evidence in support, and haven't time to get it, which is more. There,—I can't do anything more for you. Only remember my last injunction; don't faint till the last extremity, or we should have all this work to go through again; it is, however, a last resource, if Lobb makes himself particularly unpleasant. Madame Lareine, I trust to you to assist us with a little sympathy—but I wouldn't venture to suggest anything to you. Ann Iron, if you see me tap my nose with my spectacles, jump up and look at Dr. Lobb as if he owed you a quarter's wages, and wouldn't pay: as for you, Mrs. Gollop, if you see your sweet mistress in trouble, you may howl in a low tone, but not so as to get turned out of Court; just as if your own darling Paddy was off in an emigrant ship from the quay at Limerick, and they were passing you down the ladder. Now I must be off; the Usher's blowing his nose,—that means that Sir Cresswell's done his sherry. I'll just step round through the crowd, so that the Jury shan't think I've been talking with you. One more smile, my dear Mrs. Barber. God bless you! Take care of yourself."

So saying, with a pleasant nod, Mr. Lamb disappeared. The three Judges came back into Court, and for a minute or two there was a general bustle, and shaking into places. In the midst of this, my friend Lamb emerged from the crowd at the other side of the well, just after the door had been opened, and took his seat, but quite out of breath, and as though he had been running hard to be back in time. He was, however, there to conduct Mrs. Barber to the bottom of the steps, and hand her back to the charge of the usher. She was soon inside the pen again, and took her seat without any difficulty; and he goes so far as to say that Sir C. C.

himself could not have been more at his ease in his own Court than was my graceful little friend Mrs. Barber. Now Dr. Lobb may do his worst—we are all ready, and waiting for him.

Dr. L. "Now, Mrs. Barber, allow me to call your attention for a moment to the incidents immediately preceding your marriage with Mr. Barber. As you have told my learned friend Dr. Dodge, your acquaintance with your future husband commenced in the Ride at Hyde Park?"

Mrs. B. "It did so."

Dr. L. "You have told the Jury that you, a young lady between sixteen and seventeen years of age, permitted yourself to be addressed in Hyde Park by a gentleman—a perfect stranger to you. Did you mention the fact at all to your parents?"

Mrs. B. "I did not."

Dr. L. "How was it the groom who attended you—for, I think, we have been told that a groom did attend upon you during these rides—made no mention at home of the fact?"

Mrs. B. "I am sure I can't say; you had better ask the man himself." Mr. Lamb here turned slightly round, and half glanced at Mrs. Barber. I fancied he was not quite satisfied with the tone in which the last answer was given; probably Mrs. B. herself thought so, too, for she added with exceeding politeness: "The groom is still living with Papa, as Mr. Barber well knows."

Dr. L. "Now stop, Mrs. Barber. You say, 'Mr. Barber well knows.' Now, how can you tell what Mr. Barber knows?"

Mrs. B. (As though quite off her guard at the pertness of this question.) "Why, it was a very short time back, when Mr. Barber was exceedingly tipsy, he knocked George down—he was always knocking people down, that was his way—and then gave him five shillings to say nothing about it. I suppose, as George had on Papa's livery, Mr. Barber knew where he was living then."

Dr. Lobb did not push this point further. The first passage of arms had not proved very favourable to him. The ferocious husband here stooped forward and whispered something into Dr. Lobb's ear, with an expression on his face which seemed to imply that Mrs. B.'s last statement was a horrid falsehood, but why waste time upon such stuff? Ah! Barber, my boy! this won't do. You're caught at last. You can't thump Sir Cresswell and beat him about as you did your sweet wife and poor George—perhaps you'd like to try! There, there, that will do. Attention to Dr. Lobb.

Dr. L. "You have given the Jury to understand, Mrs. Barber, that your hurried marriage was purely the result of Mr. Barber's impetuous fashion of courtship. Now, allow me to ask, Madam, was it not yourself who urged Mr. Barber to run off with you? And was it not owing to his profound respect for you that even the marriage—hasty as it was—was gone through?"

Mrs. B. (Her eyes flashing with anger.) "Is a lady expected to answer such a question—even here?"

Dr. L. "That is no answer, madam—and an answer I must have. Did you, or did you not,

propose to Mr. Barber, to carry you off without waiting for the licence, reproaching him at the same time with being as slow as a plunger, because he counselled delay, and the prior performance of the nuptial ceremony?"

Mrs. B. (With great dignity.) "Sir, I was a girl just turned sixteen years of age at the time, and Mr. Barber was a man of thirty-two."

The tears began to trickle slowly down Mrs. Barber's cheeks. At the same time, Madame Leocadie Lareine stood up and said, in an audible whisper, but so as to attract the attention of the Jury, "Ah! c'est trop fort."

The old Judge had been evidently puzzled for some time. His intelligence was engaged in single combat with the word "plunger;" nor would he at first admit Dr. Lobb's explanation of the term. Dictionaries were sent for, and the word was very properly overhauled. In the work of our great lexicographer it was found *PLUNGER*, from *to plunge*; *v.n.*, "One who plunges, or who casts himself into water by his own voluntary act, and by a rapid, deciduous motion; a pearl diver from the Philippine Islands; a variety of the duck tribe." Finally it was ascertained in *Rees's Supplement* (a work of authority) that the word



The letter to "Gussy Pussy."

was sometimes applied sportively or sarcastically to the officers of the Heavy Dragoons and Household Brigade, in H.B.M.S., and was probably derived from the manner in which they plunged in and out of their military boots when their horses were restive, or moving on the *grand pas*. The meaning of the term being thus authoritatively settled, the proceedings were resumed.

Dr. L. "We must have the answer at last, Mrs. Barber, but if you please we'll put it in another way. During the period of your courtship did you ever write to Mr. Barber?"

Mrs. B. (After a moment's reflection.) "I don't remember."

Dr. L. "Now recollect yourself, Mrs. Barber, and make an effort. You can remember the minutest circumstance to your husband's disadvan-

tage—now see if you can't recall a triding fact or two in his favour. I repeat my question. During the period of your courtship did you ever write to Mr. Barber?"

Mrs. Barber couldn't remember—yes, poor lady, she was doing her best—but she couldn't remember. She would not positively swear she had not written; but she would distinctly swear that she didn't remember having done so. She didn't believe she had. She was seeing Mr. Barber every day—why should she have written to him? *Dr. Lobb* fidgetted with his hand in his breast-pocket, but *Mrs. Barber* kept her eye firmly on him, and waited for his attack to develop itself. At last the learned civilian pulled out a letter, and caused it to be handed up to *Mrs. Barber*, with the inquiry whether that was in her handwriting. *Mrs.*

B. could not tell—it looked something like her handwriting—but if she was made aware of the contents she would be better able to answer the question. I observed that she glanced at the direction. The letter was finally handed to the gentleman with the despatch-box, who rose up, fixed his double-glasses upon his nose, and read it to the Court. It was, however, unfortunate that his glasses were always falling off at the most critical points of this composition—so that a good deal of the fire and spirit were inevitably lost.

"My angel Augustus—When will this end? I have been distracted since we parted. I fear that every moment will bring a discovery—and then I am lost. Oh! yes, lost—lost. For what is to become of poor Cecilia if her Augustus is taken from her. Send me, my beloved, or rather give me to-morrow a scrap of those surpassing (here the glasses fell off) whiskers—"

By the Court. "Whiskers!—that can't be. Ladies don't ask for scraps of gentlemen's whiskers. Did any lady ever ask for a scrap of your whiskers, Dr. Lobb?"

Dr. Lobb looked a little foolish, for his whiskers were magnificent; so that if no lady had requested a scrap of them, other considerations must have stood in the way.

Reading continued. "Whiskers," it certainly is whiskers here, my Lord! "*which first captivated my young heart, and awoke in me a sense of bliss unutterable. Oh! Augustus, you slow plunger, why should we wait for the rubbishy licence, just as if we were going to open a public-house—if we do it shall be (down went the glasses again), the Augustus Arms. Of course we'll go and get the fuss over, and get married somewhere or other; but I want to be with Augustus, and away from here. The Governor is so slow now—so dreadfully, horribly, wretchedly slow that it makes my poor head ache to think of him. Oh! you naughty, naughty man, you have quite bewitched your poor Cecilia. My only comfort is practising smoking with the cigars you gave me. They're rather too full for me—I should prefer mediums. Good bye, you dear, deluding Don Whiskerando. Mind to-morrow—at the tree by the Band at half-past eleven. I'm going to make myself some sherry cobbler to-night—as you told me. I ran down-stairs when dinner was laid, and got some sherry in a physic-bottle—and I took some out of each of the decanters, so that it should not be missed; and yet, Augustus, you call your Cecilia thoughtless—and I have pulled two straws out of Mama's Tuscan bonnet, which I dare say will do—if not I will bubble it up through a quill. There, good night again, you dear old thing.*"

Sissy."

Dr. L. "Well, Mrs. Barber, what do you say to that? Did you write that letter?"

Mrs. B. (With withering contempt.) "No."

Dr. L. "By virtue of your oath, Madam—and warning you fully as to the consequences of bearing false testimony—I repeat the question. Did you write that letter, or did you not?"

Mrs. B. "Never! I should think it impossible that any lady ever wrote such a letter as that."

Dr. Lobb tried to look as if he had full grounds for establishing an indictment of perjury against Mrs. B., but the feeling in Court ran sadly

against him, a feeling much increased when it turned out, in answer to a question from the old Judge, that *the letter bore no post-mark*, and had not, in point of fact, been transmitted through the post at all. Dr. Lobb, when summoned to explain how the letter came into his possession, was obliged to admit that the theory for the defence was, that this strange love-epistle, and many others of a similar character, had been conveyed by the then Miss Cecilia Montresor's nurse, Mrs. Gollop—now actually present in Court—to the hands of a certain JOSEPH MUCK, since deceased, but at that time living in the capacity of groom with Mr. Barber. My friend, Mr. Lamb, at this moment was distinctly heard to utter the interjection "Phoo!"—but at the same moment his face expressed so much respect for the Court, as he looked upward to the old Judge to see what course he would be pleased to adopt, that it was impossible to find fault with him. Not so with Mrs. Gollop. It had been quite evident for some time that that lady had been struggling with her emotions; but she was roused to a point beyond which further control was impossible at the mention of her own name, and felt that she was called upon at once to testify on behalf of her outraged mistress. Her artless anger took the form of an attack upon Mr. Barber and Dr. Lobb.

Mrs. Gollop. "Oh, you dirty, murderin' vil-lins!" (such was the manner of her testimony) "do you mane to say that me darlin' young lady who's the hoight of nobility, and propriety of spache, ever demaned herself by wroiting to the loikes o' you? That for you" (this to Mr. Barber, snapping her fingers), "and the ugly lawyer" (this to Dr. Lobb) "who sits there by the side o' you, to tell lies against ladies o' burth and fa-family at so much a-pace! Bad cess to you, you dirty ha'porth o' yalla soap!" (this to Dr. Lobb)—"down on your knase, and ask swate Miss Sissy's pardon, and his noble Lordship's. And as for you, you two ould withered mopsticks!" (this to the two Misses Barber) "how durst you call the best blood of ould Ireland 'dregs'—how durst you do it? Be out of this wid your durty Carnwall, you low-barn, pilchard-ating pair—the divil a tooth have you in your gums, or a hair on your heads betwixt you, barrin' five gray ones—and they're false. I'll bally-rag them, Miss Sissy, dear!"

I grieve to say, that at this point these touching manifestations of Celtic attachment were interrupted by Sir C. C., who, without the smallest regard to the pathos of her situation, ordered that Mrs. Gollop should be removed from the Court. This was done; but even as Mrs. G. departed, she continued to uplift her voice in testimony.

Mrs. G. "If it was me last wurd's I'd say"—(Usher. — "Now, my good woman.") "Don't good woman me—yer durt, or pull a decent lady about in so particular a way. Niver did hand o' moine carry letter to Joseph Muck, who's in thick tarments by this toime—Muck by name, and muck by nature!"

By this time the act of extrusion was completed—but still from the passage you heard the last sounds of the scuffle, and various suggestions not

of a complimentary character with reference to the memory of the late Mr. Muck.

Dr. Lobb. "I think it will be unnecessary to produce the remainder of the correspondence between Mrs. Barber and her husband during their courtship, since Mrs. Barber so positively denies the authorship. Enough is done to lay a foundation for ulterior proceedings."

The Court entirely and drily agreed with Dr. Lobb, who couldn't be said to have taken much by the production of his letter. Mrs. Barber was not to be shaken in the account she had given during her examination in chief of the occurrences at Poldadek, and contrived to import into her later evidence so many particulars relating to the style and manner of the housekeeping at that Cornish mansion, that the two Misses Barber were positively sobbing with vexation: Mrs. Barber the while contemplating them from her elevated cushion with an air of tender sympathy—

Love watching madness, with unalterable mien.

At last, when Mrs. B., in an unguarded moment, having fallen into error as to Dr. Lobb's meaning, disclosed to the Court that it was not Miss Harriet, but Miss Jane—oh! dear no, not Miss Harriet—who was in the habit of taking two pills every night in order to clear her complexion, even the learned civilian felt that the position was no longer tenable, and evacuated it, scarcely, as it seemed to me, with the honours of war. Mrs. Barber was evidently shocked at Dr. Lobb for having alluded to matters which surely should not be allowed to transpire beyond the inner regions of domestic life. Here were three distinct failures, but Dr. Lobb came up to time cheerfully for the fourth round, just as though he had not (I venture to borrow a phrase from the dialect of the P.R.) been so quietly "sent to dorse" on the three previous occasions. Mrs. Barber waited for him smiling—this time the Doctor advanced at once to the attack.

Dr. L. "Now, Mrs. Barber, about this blow which, as you allege, Mr. Barber struck you in the drawing-room at Cheltenham."

Mrs. B. (Was lost in reflection for a few moments, and then, as her eye rested upon Mr. Barber, who was sitting behind Dr. Lobb, the tears began to trickle down her cheeks; she sighed, too, poor thing! so heavily!) "I never said so."

Dr. L. "What! Madam, do you mean to tell me, and to tell the Jury, that you did not positively affirm here in this Court, but an hour ago, that your husband struck you on the arm in the drawing-room at Cheltenham with a bootjack?"

Mrs. B. (quite emptying her lungs). "A—h! Ah! I never said so."

Dr. L. "Re-e-ally, Mrs. Barber, this is a little too much. I took your words down myself."

Mrs. B. "Oh!" (with a slightly rocking movement). "Oh! Oh!"

Dr. L. "May I beg your Lordship to read the question and answer from your notes?"

The Court complied with the learned civilian's request, but it turned out that he was incorrect in this particular—that Mrs. Barber had spoken of the dressing-room, not of the drawing-room, as

the scene of this catastrophe. Dr. Lobb here incurred a very severe admonition from the Court, to the effect that he could not be too particular about the *locus in quo*—a good deal always turned upon the *locus in quo*—as Dr. Lobb ought to be well aware.

Mrs. Barber, upon this occasion, was clearly in the right, and Dr. Lobb as clearly in the wrong as to the *locus in quo*. Mrs. B., however, continued the rocking movement, which was so painful to witness, and appeared quite insensible to the compliments of the Court. I could not help fancying that Dr. Lobb was a little confused by this last blow, but he continued the persecution with unabashed front.

Mrs. B. (Still crooning.) "No! Oh, no! Don't ask me any more about it; I said, it might have been the bootjack, but I was so stunned by Mr. Barber's violence—and by the fall—that I didn't see what he held in his hand."

Dr. L. "That you didn't see what he held in his hand? Now, Madam, will you tell the Jury—by virtue of your oath—was it not a tooth-brush Mr. Barber held in his hand at the time of the alleged assault? Were not you, in a fit of jealousy, endeavouring to prevent him from going out of doors? And is it not the true account of this transaction that Mr. Barber tried to keep you off with his right hand, and so, if at all, the toothbrush, not the bootjack, came into contact with your arm?"

Mrs. Barber wouldn't swear it was the bootjack, but it couldn't have been the tooth-brush—the blow was too heavy—and she bore on her person for too many days the marks of Mr. B's. violence to render that possible. Ann Iron, her maid, had seen the contusion. She had not called in surgical assistance for fear the rumour of Mr. Barber's ferocity should get abroad,—for in those days she still loved him. All that she had done was to apply Goulard-water plentifully, and to pray for Mr. Barber at night. Indeed, when Mr. B. returned late at night, or rather early in the morning, from the Club, where he had lost all his money, he was very near renewing the attack upon her because he found her sitting up in bed crying, with her arm in a sling, singing a beautiful passage in one of Watt's hymns, recommending resignation to wives in all the trials of domestic life, with the cheerful assurance that a day would come when ferocious husbands would meet with their deserts. It appeared that Mr. B. heard this pathetic wailing in his dressing-room, which adjoined their common sleeping apartment; and, as Mr. B. informed Dr. L., stormed into the bedroom—(she was sitting up in bed)—doing his hair with two large hair-brushes, and told her "to shut up that row"—for so this man of violence denominated the pious exercise in which his exemplary wife was engaged. Mrs. B. had simply folded her arms on her breast, and told him she was prepared for any extremity.

Mr. Barber's face was a perfect study whilst this testimony was borne to his secret misdeeds. He half rose up—his mouth wide open—and glared at his former victim just as a tiger in the Zoological Gardens might glare at the fresh shoulder of mutton which he should have had

by his dinner, but which the keeper had purposely placed beyond his reach. Astonishment, however, predominated over ferocity. The wretched man could not evidently bring himself to comprehend that the truth must come out at last—and in his case it was his hired agent who was the instrument of unveiling his atrocity to the eyes of the world. I am afraid that he uttered a very forcible expression; but I know that he brought down his clenched fist violently on the desk before him, almost in contact with Dr. Lobb's ear. Mrs. Barber uttered a faint scream, and buried her face

in her hands. Mr. Lamb started up with great spirit to protect his client from the first outburst of this wretched man's anger; and, finally, Sir Cresswell administered to him an admirable rebuke, which I shall never forget to my dying day. I need not here set it forth at length, but the spirit of it was "that if Mr. Barber could not command his passions here in a Court of Justice—where he Sir C. C. was sitting, with the force of the British Empire at his back—what were the Jury to think his former conduct must have been, when a feeble and defenceless woman was in his power, in the silent hour of night, far away from all human



Sarcina. - "Shut up that row!"

help?" Finally, Mr. Barber was informed that any renewal of his violence in that Court would lead, as a simple, inevitable, and instant result, to his incarceration for an unlimited term in one of Her Majesty's gaols. It could not be said, on the whole, that Dr. L. and his fierce client had come off the victors in the fourth round. From this moment it seemed to me that the Jury had made up their minds.

Dr. Lobb did all that he could, and that all amounted just to a faint endeavour to turn the subject by a playful allusion to the fate of the unhappy lap-dog, Fido; but before he could get three sentences he was stopped by the old and informed, that as all allusion to this had been struck off his notes during the session in chief, he, Dr. Lobb, was not at

liberty to cross-examine upon it. The Doctor was obviously losing heart, for he had not yet succeeded in establishing a single point. The incident of the hair at Brussels went off very much like that of the incident of the bootjack at Cheltenham—there was an obvious absence in Dr. L.'s method of handling the point of that delicacy of manipulation which characterised any case which had passed through the hands of the firm of "LAMB and RACKEM." No dainty vision of a young uxorious husband just snipping off an end of the silken and perfumed tresses of a young angel in a dressing-gown, that he might enshrine the stolen treasure in a golden casket, and wear it upon his adoring heart, was conjured up before the mind of the British Jury—there were no hot-rolls—no tongue and chicken—no purring cat—no domestic

happiness. The cross-examination upon this point was a simple see-saw of Did you? and Did you not? which terminated entirely to the lady's advantage. I must content myself with merely indicating the theories set up by the defence to rebut most of the charges, and how these were in turn demolished by Mrs. Barber, as—indeed, how could it be otherwise, when she and Truth were on one side, and Dr. Lobb on the other?

It was then falsely pretended that the "incident of the burnt nose," at Folkestone, as described by the petitioner, was a pure fiction—that true it was that the bed in which Mrs. Barber was lying at Folkestone had been set on fire, but that the accident had entirely occurred through her own carelessness. The lady—this was Dr. L.'s infamous story—was in the habit of reading in bed, contrary to her husband's warnings, and even commands. Worse even than this—these were the occasions she selected for the perusal of French novels—a class of literature upon which Mr. Barber had set his *veto*. On the night in question Mrs. B. was reading in bed, a work called "*Mathilde, ou Mémoires d'une jeune femme*"—she fell asleep with the candlestick on her pillow, and the bed had caught fire, as well as Mrs. B.'s handkerchief, which was partly over her face. Mr. Barber, providentially, just came in in time, and in all probability by so doing saved his wife's life. He admitted that before he had gone out he had in a playful manner applied a little cold cream to Mrs. B.'s face—but simply because her complexion had been injured by the sea air, during the passage of the Channel. The lady soon disposed of this paltry fabrication. She had never read a French novel in her life, except "*Télémaque*," a work upon which she doted from its spirited delineation of character, and variety of incident, and still more because it was the favourite reading of her dear governess, Miss Sophy Snap—now Mrs. Theobald Twist, resident with her husband in New Zealand. Mr. B.'s story was a pure invention. With regard to the distressing incident, known in this case as the "incident of the ankles," Mrs. B., after she had so far recovered from her distress and indignation as to be able to speak to the point at all, admitted that Augustus had made a scene upon the platform at Folkestone—as well as on the previous night, when they had been coming out of the steamer, and sworn at her violently because—she could not say it—well, because, as he alleged, she had been slightly too indulgent to the spectators in the display of her ankles. But if such a thing had happened at all—how had it happened? When they were leaving Ostend, Augustus had insisted upon her wearing a crinoline of unusual size, and stitching under it two huge pockets filled with cigars, which he compelled her to smuggle on his account in fraud of Her Majesty's revenue. Mrs. B. said that her usual habit was, in travelling, to discard the crinoline altogether—for she was well aware that ladies, with all the care and discretion they could exercise, could not upon all occasions guard against all contingencies when their dresses were extended according to the prevailing fashion. Dr. Lobb made just as little of these two points as

of all that had gone before. When they had been disposed of—as described—he continued the cross-examination.

Dr. L. "Now Mrs. B., it results from all we have heard—from what took place at Cheltenham, at Brussels, at Folkestone, and elsewhere—that after leaving Folkestone you were living on the worst possible terms with your husband, who, as you tell us, had neglected you, sworn at you, insulted you, set fire to you, and beaten you. Is that so?"

What could the Doctor be driving at? I noticed just the slightest perceptible movement in Lamb's brow.

Mrs. B. "No, sir—not upon the worst possible terms—that came afterwards."

Dr. L. "*That came afterwards*. To what do you allude, Madam?"

Lobb had been so severely punished in his previous collisions with Mrs. Barber, that he had now quite lost his temper,—a circumstance which placed him almost at the mercy of his antagonist. Mrs. Barber—but women are wonderful creatures!—had cooled down to the temperature of an iced sword-blade. The learned civilian had so far forgotten himself as to speak to the lady rudely, almost coarsely,—so that there was a universal desire felt in Court to kick him out of it. He was not prepared for the reply. Mrs. Barber deliberately rose from her seat, as pale as death, and advancing to the front of the pen in full sight of the Jury, said, in a quiet emphatic way,—

Mrs. B. "Because, sir, I had not yet been staying at Scarborough with my child while my husband was living at another Hotel in the same town with the lady whom he has selected to fill my place. *That came afterwards!*"

With these words, Mrs. Barber retired again to the back of the pen, and, resuming her seat, burst into tears, leaving Dr. Lobb to squabble with the Judge upon the propriety of expunging this answer from his notes, on the ground that it was only relevant to the first issue, which was uncontested. It was no use: the Court was in such a state of high moral elevation, that the only wonder was that Lobb was not summarily sent to Bridewell with hard labour for fourteen days at least. Poor wretch; he couldn't afford to miss his point, as it is called in these regions, and so rushed on to further destruction, but with a kind of half apology.

Dr. L. "I had no intention, Mrs. Barber, I assure you, of re-opening that sore. No one can more deeply regret than my learned friends and myself that most painful incident in Mr. Barber's conduct; and I beg you to observe, that I have not put one question to you upon the subject, because I felt that you were fully entitled to—"

By the Court. "There, there, Dr. Lobb, you owed the lady an apology, and we'll take it that it is made. Go on."

Dr. L. (In a half-beaten way.) "Well, Mrs. Barber, after the incidents named, you were living at least on very bad terms with your husband?"

Mrs. B. (Making ineffectual attempts at tearful speech, at last got out with difficulty.) "Yes."

Dr. L. "Now, Madam, will you be good

enough to look at these notes, and tell me whether you admit them to be in your handwriting? I hope we shall be more fortunate than last time."

Mrs. B. (Sobbing.) "I ho—ho—ho—hope s—s—o. Yes. I wr—o—ote these le—le—let—ters."

The notes—they were three in number—were then handed up to the gentleman who could not keep his double-glasses on, and by him read out.

"Why does Gussy Pussy stop away so long from his widowed fond Cecilia? I can't go to sleep at night for thinking of you, my own kind husband. The world is to me a blank when I am parted from my Augustus. I wonder how I could have lived through those cold days before my Oggy Poggy took me to his nest, and cherished and warmed my soul into the real poetry of existence. Ah, my Augustus! what years of happiness—nay, of bliss—you have given me! I water your dear hyacinth every morning, and tend it for your sake, even as you have tended me. Babe's blessed little tum-tum has been rather tight, and Mamma thinks he wants Dr. Rhubarb—he can already say, 'Bes—der—Pa.' So says your fond Cecilia."

The reader lost his glasses three times in the course of reading this remarkable letter—viz., at the words "Oggy Poggy," at the words "tum-tum," and at the infant's form of benediction.

The next note was shorter. The child's disorder had evidently increased.

"Oh! my Augustus, I shall go distracted! Our blessed child—your dear image—is ill and suffering. The doctors—I have called in three physicians, for I know how regardless of expense you are when your Cecilia's feelings are concerned—say that the child is not in danger, but I cannot think so. My good, dear, indulgent Augustus, who have never given me a moment's anxiety or pain since the first blessed day when I met you in Hyde Park, come back to your agonised but loving wife, Cecilia B."

This note was plainer sailing—the glasses only fell twice. The third note was still shorter.

"Dearest Gus,—Babe's tum-tum is all right again, and my poor heart is at rest. You know how I long for you back again, to pull your dear old whiskers; but if you are amusing yourself, don't hurry back on my account. I will only go to meet every train on the chance of finding you fifteen minutes sooner, for I would not lose one precious moment of Gussy's company. No! I can't say—stay away. Come to me by the next train, and send a telegram to tell me that you are coming to your loving Cecilia."

The glasses only fell off once during the reading of this note, at the word "whiskers." The notes had neither dates nor direction, but the envelopes bore the post-marks of Brighton on three successive days (this point was not disputed), and these dates were posterior in order of time to the acts of cruelty already spoken to by Mrs. Barber. They certainly did appear somewhat inconsistent with the theory set up for the Petitioner, namely, that Mr. Barber was an oppressive, ferocious, tyrannical, wife-beating, bruising, and burning husband. Dr. Lobb this time marched to assured victory, for now he had Mrs. Barber's handwriting to show against her. But the explanation given by the lady was ample and complete. Mr. Barber had an

uncle, an old East Indian Merchant Captain, from whom he had expectations, and who occasionally supplied him with money. This gentleman was a bachelor, but was, however, a great stickler for the happiness of married life, and would certainly have entirely cut off the supplies had he imagined that Mr. Barber was ill-using his unfortunate wife. Upon the occasions when these letters were written, Mr. Barber wanted help from his uncle, and before leaving home he had, under the most terrible threats, compelled his wife to write the notes in question, and to post them on three successive days. When pressed rather hard upon the point of duplicity, Mrs. Barber could but cry, and admit that it was very wrong; but indeed she was afraid of her life—Mr. Barber held her down in a chair, and threatened her so. Oh yes! she had often deeply accused herself of perfidy to the kind old Captain—the only one of her husband's relatives for whom she ever entertained any respect; but Dr. Lobb didn't know what a woman's feelings were when a strong man was standing over her, and with the full ferocity of the sex, threatening her life. Dr. Lobb's gun had again missed fire.

Finally, Mrs. Barber scarcely condescended to notice Dr. Lobb's suggestion with regard to the luminous inscription, and the saucers filled with spirits of wine, and the metaphysical terrors of Herne Bay, which was to the effect that her loving husband had upon one occasion, and simply to solace their solitude in that remote watering-place, induced her to play at two-handed snap-dragon, and amused her with a magic-lantern. No: the incident was one of pure, unmitigated, excruciating horror, just as she had related it. Had she complained to her landlady? No! She became insensible; and as she was afterwards informed, congestion of the brain had been set up. It was not by agreement with herself, and at her own request, that Mr. B. had danced the Cachucha in her crinoline. She was never so shocked in her life, and could not look the three Messrs. Winterbotham in the face for weeks after the painful occurrence. Then, with regard to the diaphanous petticoats with the Holy Work and the Cotton Tops, Mrs. Barber entirely and indignantly repudiated the disgusting idea that she had used the Holy Work petticoats under tarlatan skirts with any idea of affording to the world a clearer idea of the Montresor foot, ankle—aye, and more than this. The question was an outrage. No! Mr. Barber had not insisted that she should wear worsted stockings out of regard to her health, and because her chest was delicate. He had never said that she was welcome to wear silk stockings as long as she pleased, so that she would only wear worsted under them in winter and in damp weather. He had been losing heavily at pool, when he proposed to her to wear the Cotton-Tops, and his sole object was—not her health—but a few miserable shillings, to enable him to re-appear at the billiard-table.

Dr. Lobb had done with the witness, who descended from the pen unshaken in any material way by the cross-examination.

Madame Léocadie Lareine was now called up, and examined in chief by Dr. Dodge. It was a magnificent spectacle to behold the way in which

DIVORCE A VINCULO ; OR, THE TERRORS OF SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL.

(Continued from p. 305.)



Portrait of the Respondent, from a sketch in the possession of the Petitioner's family.

the attention of the bystanders to the conclusions at which they had arrived, as the result of their professional experience. "Why the dooce," said Wig number One, "does Barber, if he's sick of his wife, defend the second issue? He has only got to let her make her case good, and he is rid of her."

"No, no, my dear fellow," said Wig number Two; "'pinion of the world—'pinion of the world. Man goes a little wrong—everybody does that. Pure peccadillo—pure peccadillo. That's all right. Whack a woman—'pinion of the world—'pinion of the world dead against you. That's all wrong—that's all wrong. Barber must fight second issue—'specially as he married his wife for her money."

"The vara best thing that cud happen to Mester Barber," struck in our old Scottish friend, the *amicus curiæ* of the other day, "wad be to mak oot a gud story, and have the vairdick just go agenst him. For you see, in that case, and if he plays his cairds wall, he'll marry a leddy of fortin' within the three months after the advantage of siccan a trial as this. But it wadna do to mak oot that he had bedeeveled and thumped his

HE next morning the Court met for the despatch of business, and of Mr. Barber. Mr. Lamb introduced his fair client into Court in a quiet, unobtrusive way and according to the carefully-considered system upon which he usually acted, and from which he saw no reason for departing in the present instance, a seat was provided for the lady under the lee of the jury-box, but well out of sight of the Jury. The interest of the day's proceedings was naturally concentrated upon that fellow Barber, who, not satisfied with having deserted, and abandoned, and beaten his wife, was to-day to stand up in the presence of a British jury and justify his acts. Before the Judges had taken their seats, there was the usual buzzing and murmuring sound in Court. My attention was called to the conversation of a knot of young and blooming barristers who stood near me, and who were conversing in a somewhat loud and emphatic tone, as though to call

present leddy ower much, for it's no the positive fac of bein' well pounded that is delectful to female apprehension—but joost the pleasin sensation of tarror consequent upon bein lenkit or conjoined to a mon of uncontrawled passions and ready fests. The real refinement of sentiment is waiting for the 'blaw that's just a comin,' but never comes. Hech! but I cud tell you a leetle awnedut—"

We had not the opportunity of hearing the particulars of the anecdote in question, because at this moment the three Judges entered, and took their seats as before. Mr. SHUTTLECOCK, Q.C., was now pointed out to me: he was sitting in the lower seat appropriated to the accommodation of the arch-gladiators in this exciting arena, when resting from their toils. He was a lithe, thin man, with acute features, who must have been well sweated in his youth in legal dunghills, and well dosed with the strong waters of the Reports, to bring him into his actual and effective fighting condition. Candour seemed to be the chief and amiable characteristic of his mind. At the same time, I must admit that there was a certain dullness about his appreciation of the force of his adversary's arguments, which was not a little surprising, when you considered with what acuteness he followed his own to their remotest consequences. Well! I suppose it is all right that Mr. Barber, fore-judged as he is, should have some person to stand up for him, and apologise to the human race in his name for the obloquy he has brought upon our common nature. So Mr. Shuttlecock may begin as soon as he likes. Mr. Shuttlecock did so.

"May it please you, my Luds and Gentlemen of the Jury. I wish I could stand up before you to-day, and submit to your judgment such evidence as would entirely exonerate my client, Mr. Augustus Barber, the Respondent in this case, from the many and serious charges which have been brought against him by his wife, the unfortunate Petitioner, who has been driven, by his *desertion*, to apply for relief to this Court, and to you. I wish I could do this, Gentlemen; but I tell you at once, frankly and sincerely, that I cannot. I am not in a condition to tell you that Mr. Barber has been in all respects a pattern of conjugal virtue—a model husband—a man whose example you would hold forth to young men about to marry for their instruction and imitation. I think you will agree with me when I say, that no amount of levity—no number of petty domestic vexations, however sedulously and for however long a period consistently and systematically inflicted by the wife upon the husband, justify any Englishman who, for the time being, may be acting in the latter capacity, in proceeding so far as actual desertion of the domestic hearth. I at once fully and heartily condemn Mr. Barber in this respect, that contrary to his faith plighted at the altar—in defiance of the laws of his country—in contempt of the usages of society—he has abandoned that lady whom he had sworn to cherish and protect, no matter what may have been the provocations he received from her in the course of their married life. Still less can I attempt to tell him when his desertion assumes so flagrant

a form as that actually charged. No, Gentlemen, it is the duty of an advocate to guide, not to mislead—or rather to endeavour to mislead—a British Jury, though the endeavour would, I am sure, only result in his own confusion. It is the point of honour amongst the gentlemen whom I see around me, and you see before you, in all cases to submit the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, to the consideration of the Jury, and that I will endeavour to do this day. We cannot, I fear, help arriving at the conclusion, that in one important particular Mr. Barber has violated the nuptial pledge; and, therefore, your verdict must be for the lady on that point. I can't struggle against such a decision. I haven't a word to say against it. Mrs. Barber is fully entitled to ask for a judicial separation—but not for an absolute dissolution of the marriage—not for an absolute dissolution. In order to do so, she must prove a great deal more than she has been able to prove—for assertions, Gentlemen, are not facts. I fear that the '*ipsa dixit*,' or 'she said it,' is a still more unstable foundation on which to found a decision than the '*ipse dixit*,' or 'he said it.' In either case you, Gentlemen, I am sure, will not be content with the bare assertions of the parties most deeply interested in the event of this trial; but like twelve calm, dispassionate Englishmen, well versed in the ways of the world, will seek for corroboration and external evidence before you arrive at a conclusion which will certainly be pregnant with misery or happiness to the two parties who crave your judgment this day."

There was considerable moral dignity about the manner in which Mr. Shuttlecock in the first part of his opening evacuated the untenable post, and repudiated all complicity (even as a professional accessory after the fact) with the abandoned husband. In point of fact, when he washed his hands with imaginary soap, and then with a stern Roman gesture waved Mr. Barber away from his chambers, and denied him the benefit of his legal assistance, the learned gentleman carried the Court with him, and I think predisposed the Jury to listen to his after-statements. He might certainly be mistaken himself—his mind might be loaded with prejudice, but all Mr. Shuttlecock desired was fair play.

"Now, Gentlemen, as the law actually stands, and as I am sure his Ludship will tell you, the wife who seeks for an absolute dissolution of the marriage must prove not only what we admit on the first issue, but furthermore make out to the satisfaction of the Jury that her husband has systematically, and cruelly ill-used her. I am not speaking of mere tiffs, mere petty differences of opinion—of the *amantium ira* which as the Poet tells us, and tells us truly, are but the renewals of love. It won't suffice to dissolve an English marriage that the husband did upon one occasion refuse to accompany his wife to hear the Band play at Kensington Gardens, and upon another insisted upon taking her to Broadstairs instead of Brighton. If such outrages as these, however they may rankle in the female mind, were held sufficient to procure a dissolution of our marriages, I fear that many of us would be cast back upon cold comfortless celibacy whilst we were engaged

in daily and nightly toil to procure the means of ease and luxury for those who would banish us from their hearts, and from our own homes because we had fainted, not faltered in their service. You must have placed before you evidence of genuine *bond fide* cruelty in the ordinary and reasonable acceptance of the term, before you would think it right to darken the whole of a man's future existence, and to extinguish the fire upon his once happy hearth. Now how does the case stand between Mr. and Mrs. Barber, save in

the one solitary instance of alleged cruelty at Cheltenham of which I will speak presently?—for as for the ridiculous story of Mr. Barber's setting fire to the lady's nose at Folkestone I will not insult your understanding by laying very great stress upon that." (Here Dr. Lobb whispered something to his chief, who continued): "I beg your pardon, Gentlemen, I am reminded by my learned friend that there is a second instance charged, when Mr. Barber, as she alleges, cut off her hair at Brussels—that is to say—as we assert,



Provocation.

at her own request pulled out a few gray hairs from her head which were to the lady the first indication that her dazzling beauty was but of mortal mould—"

Here Mrs. Barber jumped up from her seat, and Ann Iron sat down, so that the lady stood fully revealed to the Court, but Mr. Shuttlecock—not one whit abashed by the splendid vision, and talking at the lady, continued:

—"that all that's bright must fade," and the time was not far distant when those charms which had captivated Mr. Barber's heart, and not proved wholly without effect upon general society, must somewhat sink from their meridian splendour; when the bright eye would fall dull; the graceful form lose somewhat of its taper and enchanting proportions; the smooth brow be deformed with wrinkles—and nothing survive worthy of admiration but the memory of a well-spent life—"

Mrs. Barber sate down again, and Ann Iron stood up. The two Misses Barber clutched their skinny fingers with diabolical glee, and nodded at each other like the witches in Macbeth when the slab mixture in their infernal caldron is bubbling to their satisfaction, and emitting the correct devil's-truffle stench so grateful to Hecate and her friends at their little *ré-unions*.

Mr. Shuttlecock was evidently a man of different mould to Dr. Lobb, he continued:

"Beyond this instance named, of which, Gentlemen, I promise you that I will render, and Mr. Barber will render due account, what remains? Mrs. Barber says, My husband's sisters wore two flannel dressing gowns—dissolve my marriage! The same two ladies, whose fostering care and open hospitality I repaid with the grossest ingratitude, upon one occasion put my hair into curl-papers;—Mrs. Barber's hair, Gentlemen, plays a very lead-

ing part in this cause!—dissolve my marriage! Mr. Barber refused to give me his arm when we were out walking together—dissolve my marriage! Mr. Barber put on my very preposterous and exaggerated crinoline one evening:—and, Gentlemen, where would have been the great harm if my client had shamed the lady into the use of a somewhat less ridiculous petticoat?—dissolve my marriage! Now, Gentlemen, be just; whatever opinion you may entertain of my client, as husbands, as fathers, as brothers, you must, I am very confident, be ready to set your faces against the prevailing fashion of ladies' dress, and not be very much at variance with Mr. Barber, who holds strong and serious opinions upon the subject, and esteems this crinoline, as it is called, not a fitting garb for the wear of a modest and decorous British matron. Again, Gentlemen (and here I must call your attention specifically to the fact that it is not we who have raised this question;—Mr. Barber would, if the lady had allowed it, have been the last man to resort to recrimination, or to unveil her little foibles before the eyes of a British Jury, although she has shown no great tenderness to *his* defects of temper); but, again: Mrs. Barber says, my husband would not permit me to wear transparent petticoats over my huge balloon-like crinoline—dissolve my marriage! Why, doesn't the very course and tenor of the accusation drive your minds—as I confess it does my own—irresistibly to the conclusion, that it was not of neglect of the lady, but of over-care and nervous anxiety for her welfare and fair repute, of which my client was guilty—if guilt there were; until she herself, by her own levity and coquetry, and by a system of petty persecutions, drove him from her side, estranged his affections, and did her best to compel him to seek elsewhere for that domestic comfort and sympathy which he could no longer look for at home." (Mr. Shuttlecock accompanied the concluding phrases with a rising and falling movement of his body, just like a jockey over the last quarter of a mile of a race-course.) "Why, if Mr. Barber hadn't cared for his wife, why should he have troubled himself as to what she wore, or what she didn't wear? He wouldn't have cared a button about it. She might, in the exercise of her own discretion, have displayed, or not displayed, her feet and ankles. All he would have wanted would have been to be relieved from the *onus* of her presence. In point of fact, the more ridiculous and unbecoming her attire, the better pleased would he have been. But this was not so. Mr. Barber in this instance, as in all others till his home was rendered unbearable to him, was an over-indulgent, an over-attentive, an over-anxious, an over-fond husband. That was his real fault, and that is why we are here to-day."

I was beginning to forget what Mr. Battledove had told us, and what Mrs. Barber had stated herself when under examination; but the Court and the Jury will put Mr. Shuttlecock right in the end. Had he been in Court when the lady was in the pen, I am very sure he would never have represented these little transactions in so odious a light. Dr. Lobb ought to have carried ~~the~~ case through; he was handling it very nicely

when Mr. Shuttlecock came in, and put our minds into such a state of confusion. The learned gentleman continued:

"There is certainly another point—I scarcely know how to approach it with sufficient gravity—but since so much has been made of it on the other side, I suppose it will be expected that in Mr. Barber's name I should answer the charge. Mrs. Barber says, 'I had stipulated with my husband in a very special and express way before my marriage—ay, during the period of our courtship—that I should be allowed, during coverture, to wear silken stockings, and no others. Despite, however, of all his promises—of all his protestations—my brutal and perjured husband did, within a very short space, forget these sacred obligations, and compel me to wear stockings, half of silk—half of cotton; or, if my learned friend, Dr. Dodge, will have it so,—COTTON TOPS. Now, Gentlemen, let us pause for a moment over these Cotton Tops—let us turn them inside out—and see what is the legitimate inference to be derived thence. Here we find a young lady just at the most critical period of her life—when she has exchanged vows, for the first time, with her lover or husband—call him what you will—who sees before her an unknown and untried future, which, in most cases, Love tinges with its purple hues. What is she thinking about?—that she will be a glory in his prosperity—a solace in his sickness and adversity, to that man in whom she believes as the type and exemplar of glorified humanity? Pardon me, Gentlemen, if I carry you back to the times in which we also—we hard worldly men believed in such things—even *we*! Well! what is this young girl thinking about? Why, that a silken stocking will set off her foot and ankle to greater advantage than a stocking of any other texture. That is her notion of Love—that is the acorn out of which the sturdy oak of Mr. Barber's domestic happiness is to grow. Do you see, now, Gentlemen, where I am coming to? Does not that agreement, made during the burning fervour of courtship, furnish you with a key by which you can explain the subsequent transactions at Folkestone, at Brussels, and elsewhere? Of course a lady who loved to clothe her dainty feet to such advantage, would be nervously anxious to keep the secret of her hidden symmetries and charms to herself, especially when her affections had departed from her husband, as Mrs. Barber admits in her own case, they had. She wouldn't lift the end of her gown by a quarter of an inch upon a railway-platform—not she! Would not—and I leave this suggestion to your own consideration, Gentlemen of the Jury,—would not the same feeling which had imposed that pre-nuptial agreement pervade the whole of Mrs. Barber's married life? Silk stockings in the first place—Love afterwards."

This seemed a very hardy way of dealing with this incident; but what certainly did surprise me was to see my friend Lamb, by whose side I was sitting, take out a pencil and indorse a brief which his clerk had just brought with him—"Mr. Shuttlecock, Q.C., with you Dr. Dodge, 50 guas." The learned Counsel continued, without being aware of the good fortune which was awaiting him, in a sentimental way:

"After all, Gentlemen, married life may be fairly enough represented by these COTTON TOPS of which we have heard so much, half-silk and half-cotton—one half for comfort one half for show. Mrs. Barber looked to find all silk, and she was mistaken. Had she been contented with that moderate amount of happiness beyond which, as it seems, human beings can scarcely hope to go, we should have heard nothing of her complaints here to-day—nor would her husband have been driven to those expedients for making life tolerable which we all deplore. Now let us keep these Cotton Tops in view a little longer. Mrs. Barber swears that she did not perform the acts charged at Folkestone; Mr. Barber swears she did. There's oath against oath. Now read Mrs. Barber's character by the light of that special agreement with reference to silk stockings, which she made before her marriage—and, Gentlemen, I ask you as men of the world, is it not possible—is it not probable—is it not well-nigh certain—nay, is it not certain that the lady is mistaken in her version of the transactions at Folkestone? But if she was mistaken in one instance why not in others? Of course I can't carry the Cotton Tops into the dressing-room at Cheltenham—nor the breakfast-room at Brussels—but I repeat it, if it can be proved to your satisfaction that Mrs. Barber was mistaken once—observe I use a very mild, a very guarded, a very cautious expression—why not twice, and thrice? I will put Mr. Barber before you, and he will tell you that he indignantly repudiates the idea of ever having lifted his hand against his wife during the period of their marriage. He will tell you that at Cheltenham Mrs. Barber by her own act knocked her wrist slightly against a tooth-brush with which he was brushing his teeth—that he never cut off her hair at Brussels as she alleges—that at Herne Bay the ridiculous scene with the magic lanthorn had no existence save in her own imagination—but that in all respects, and at all times till driven away from his home by the lady's own levity and indifference he has been to her an anxious—a tender—and a loving husband. I wish, Gentlemen of the Jury, I could stop here!"

What could Mr. Shuttlecock be driving at? I am sure he has gone far enough. It would require us to drive out of our minds all that we have heard for many days past, before we could admit this catch-penny story about Mr. Barber's attention and devotion to his wife. Something, however, was coming, for it was obvious that Mr. Shuttlecock was making up his face for a great and concluding effort.

"I wish, gentlemen, I could stop here. But although my client, Mr. Barber, has most strenuously, but most properly forbidden me to produce before you matter for grave recrimination, I should not be performing my duty to him—no, nor to you, Gentlemen—if I did not again recur to that which has been the real secret of the domestic unhappiness upon which you are called to pronounce your decision this day. What do you say to Madame Léocadie Lareine and her evidence? If I had been in Court, I should like to have asked that lady, if we dull moral Englishmen are to have French wives, why should we not act like French

husbands? I should like to know what this French lady would have said to that? If Mrs. Barber is to waste the money which should have been expended upon the common subsistence of the family in the gratification of her inordinate love of dress, why should not Mr. Barber take these slight liberties with the marriage vow which French husbands are accustomed to take amidst very general applause? *No, Gentlemen of the Jury, we want no French witnesses—no French wives—no French manners here.* But, in conclusion, I will tell you once more, and repeat it to you again, as Mr. Barber will tell you, that it was his wife's levity of conduct—observe, I go no further—and passion for admiration which first drove him from his home. Mrs. Barber had a kind word and a warm smile for everybody but him; and I cannot conceal from you, and it would be wrong to conceal from you, the fact that my client, like the famous Moor of Venice, is a man of jealous temperament, somewhat too exacting it may be of a return for his devotion,—for his unbounded affection. What drove him from his home, and what has driven him here to day, was that

"There where he had garner'd up his heart,
Where either he must live or bear no life,
The fountain from the which his current ran,
Or else dried up; to be discarded thence!
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
To knot and gender in;—

Ay! that was too much for him—more than his manly heart could bear. By degrees, I admit it, his affections became estranged from his lady; but if this was so, who was to blame? Even at the worst, when the volcano of passion in his heart had burnt itself out, and had become a cold and icy glacier, Mr. Barber never by word or deed treated his wife with unkindness; and never in the course of his life raised his hand against her erring but sacred head. He shall tell you so himself. Call Mr. Barber."

With these words Mr. Shuttlecock sat down, leaving the Court and Jury in a perfect state of intellectual muddle and confusion.

I had not noticed the fact during the excitement caused by Mr. Shuttlecock's speech, but when he had concluded, and I looked around me, I was perfectly astounded at the number of barristers who had made their way into Court, and were now to be seen (it is usual, in such cases, to refer to "Vallombrosa," "autumn leaves," &c., but I forbear,) standing huddled together in the space on the proper left of the seats devoted to the accommodation of the Bar. It was just like a pit-crush in the grand old days of "Drury" or "the Garden." The learned gentlemen were so tightly packed that I scarcely think that if a blue-bottle had settled upon any of their noses, the owner of the feature in question would have been able to seek for relief in any other way than by twitching it about; or, if the insect had persevered in its attentions, despite of the uncertain foot-hold, by rubbing it against the tight little grey tails which depended from the wig of the learned gentleman immediately before him. Mr. Battledove, too, appeared in his place: how he

had got there, unless indeed he had risen through a well-oiled trap-door, I am wholly unable to say. All indications around us seemed to suggest that the critical moment of the struggle had arrived, and that the three learned Horatii and the three equally learned Curiatii were to engage in decisive conflict over Mr. Barber's prostrate form. Where I sat I could not help hearing the general sense of Mr. Shuttlecock's hurried but emphatic suggestion to Dr. Lobb, whose duty it was to examine Mr. Barber in chief—it was something about "A chaste system of denegation, and then counter!" I did not quite understand what the crafty advocate intended at the moment, but his meaning soon became intelligible enough.

Mr. Barber was duly sworn: but for him there were no delicate attentions, no courteous requests to take his seat on the gorgeous cushion at the back of the pen. Even the kind old Judge—who was breathing, as one may say, a new quill, and giving it a preliminary canter over the paper preparatory to settling down for the note-taking business—simply growled at the Respondent, and told him to "stand well forward." Sir C. C. gave him a severe but mournful glance, and the third Judge reclined back in his chair, awful as the third Erinnys meditating on the possibility that Orestes might yet escape. Mr. Barber's aspect was pale and disgusting. What a contrast in his appearance to that of the beautiful being who so lately occupied that place!

Our excited expectations were destined to momentary disappointment, and I soon saw what it was that Mr. Shuttlecock had pointed out to Dr. Lobb as the path of safety. One by one he took Mrs. Barber's allegations, and embodied each in the form of a coarse and distinct question which only admitted in reply of a "Yes," or "No." In order to avoid the re-introduction of incidents which would become nauseous by frequent repetition, I must then beg that the reader will understand that Mr. Barber traversed each of his amiable lady's assertions *modo et formâ*, and that, with exceedingly rare exceptions, Dr. Lobb, being kept within the limits of discretion by a sharp, admonitory glance from his thin and watchful chief, never permitted him to wander out of those narrow bounds. Mr. Barber's manner, which at first had yielded indications of nervousness, got more assured as he proceeded; indeed, with reference to the incident at Cheltenham, he went so far, in reply to a question from Dr. Lobb, as to ask him in return, "If it was likely now that a man would clean his teeth with a boot-jack?" a degree of pertness which brought the Court down on him like a thunderbolt. He persisted most emphatically in his declaration, that he had never in any way interfered with Mrs. Barber in her desire to wear silk stockings—saving in so far as repeated prayers on his part, that she would not endanger her precious health by refusing to wear worsted stockings under them in winter time and rainy weather, might be construed as such interference. Dr. Lobb continued:

Dr. L. "And now, Mr. Barber, that we have disposed of all Mrs. Barber's assertions in a way which will, I hope, prove satisfactory to the Jury, I think they would like to hear a little of your

own complaints. Did Mrs. Barber make your home a happy one to you?"

Mr. B. "Certainly not. I was the most miserable brute—I mean person—going. I'd have changed places with a cab-driver at any moment with the greatest pleasure."

Dr. L. "*Changed places with a cab-driver at any moment.* Just so. But be pleased, sir, to give the Jury some particulars. What happened? How did Mrs. Barber wound and lacerate your feelings, and poison your existence if I may so say?" (Here the learned civilian repeated his words not without a certain unctuous relish, as though he had just hit upon the right term). "Yes! poison your existence?"

Mr. B. "Why, sir, it's difficult to say—that she did this, or that. She didn't exactly fling the teapot at my head, or lock me out of doors: but she always made it out as if I was a madman, and she was my keeper. When I was pretty jolly—I mean in good spirits—she was always in a low nervous state; and if I was out of spirits, she was all for going out for a lark—I mean to enjoy ourselves. Then there was her uncle Viscount Poteen, and her five noble cousins, the five Miss O'Toddys of Castle Toddy, somewhere in Connemara."

Dr. L. "*Viscount Poteen and the five Miss O'Toddys.* Very well, sir, go on."

Mr. B. "Why, sir, my wife was always telling me what an advantage it was to me to have married into a noble Irish family; but I wish, sir, you'd seen the Viscount over a glass of punch, and how the five Miss O'Toddys would get the better of a leg of mutton. Then, by George, sir! they were so dirty, it was a perfect shame. The house was never empty of them; and Mrs. Barber and me used to have squabbles about that, especially after I'd sent home five tubs, of different sizes, to their lodgings on Valentine's Day, as a broad hint. Why, sir, the Viscount was going to call me out for that, and only withdrew his challenge when I consented to become a Director of 'The Company for converting the turf on the Poteen estate into animal food, and exporting it to Brazil.' As I used to tell him, sir, they'd got a good head of cattle there already."

Dr. L. "Never mind that, Mr. Barber—that's not evidence. Mrs. Barber habitually converted her aristocratic connections into machinery for tormenting you. What then?"

Mr. B. "Why, sir, there was the baby—she was always slobbering me over with the baby, and making me hold it, and forgetting to take it back again when people called. Nights and nights, sir, I've spent walking up and down the bed-room with the baby in my arms, and got called a brute into the bargain."

By the Court. "What's that, Dr. Lobb?"

Dr. L. "Mrs. Barber used to compel Mr. Barber to carry the babe up and down the bed-room, and call him a brute, My Lud."

By the Court. "Very good; I've got that."

Mr. B. "Then, sir, she was always practising singing—and giving great parties for people to come and hear her at it. There wasn't a spot in the house where I could go to get a moment's quiet. I tried the back attic, but I was told I

must not smoke there, on account of the servant maids, as they objected to the smell of tobacco. Why, sir, if you'd seen our drawing-room in Upper Berkeley Street, with a lot of people there seated round, as if they'd been going to see conjuring, and heard Mrs. Barber howling away in the midst of us, you'd have been sorry for me. And she would make me bring the fellows from the Clubs; and when we were sick of the noise, and sneaked down-stairs into the hat room to have a little beer—not much more peace for me that night!”

Dr. L. “*Not much more peace for you that night: Go on, sir. Go on.*”

Mr. B. Why, sir, I can't remember it all of a heap. There was another day—it was the last Derby Day but two—the men were all waiting for me with the drag to be off; and just as I was tying on my veil Mrs. Barber called me in, and said she would not let me go because confirmation was coming on, and it was my duty, as head of the family, to stop at home and cross-examine little Nancy Tigg—the under nursery-maid—for confirmation. Of course I went all the same, but I got nothing but black-looks, sir, for weeks afterwards; though it's my opinion if we'd asked Mrs. Barber to take a seat in the drag herself—”

Dr. L. “*Never mind your opinion, sir, that's not evidence.*”

It would be superfluous to go beyond this sample of Mr. Barber's examination in chief; and certainly, if his word was to be believed, the rose leaves in his bower were not always uncrumpled—but what of that? We shall soon see to whose statements the Jury will give the readiest credence. I certainly should not have liked to have been in Mr. B.'s position when Mr. Battledove got up, and took him in hand. That gentleman occupied a good quarter of an hour—I am sure I should be nearer the truth if I said half-an-hour—in wrangling with Mr. Barber and the Court upon whether or no he could be compelled to answer certain questions which would, if answered, have convicted him of perjury. All sorts of documents, and registers were handed up—and Mr. B. was growled at, and stormed at by one side; and soothed and encouraged by the other—but the upshot was, that the Court informed him, that he need not answer Mr. Battledove's question, unless he chose. Mr. Battledove might put it, but he was not obliged to answer to it. Mr. Battledove made an emphatic pause—glared at the Jury—and then in a tone of superhuman solemnity repeated his question. Mr. Barber, acting upon the suggestion of the Court, declined to answer it.

“*Very good, sir,*” said Mr. Battledove, with a contemptuous smile, “*that's quite satisfactory,—that will do.*”

Of course it was;—one need not be a great lawyer to know, that if a man is so unscrupulous as to obtain a marriage licence by perjury, he would not be very particular upon another occasion when a temptation, equally strong, is set before him. I trust I am not saying anything deep and out of the way, but that was the result of the discussion in my mind. Mr. Battledove then having placed Mr. Barber in the comfortable position of a

perjured man, proceeded to turn him inside out, and hold him in his true colours before the Jury and the Court. Whose money was it which had been expended upon that journey to Epsom? Was it only about little Nancy Tigg and the confirmation that Mrs. Barber had spoken? Was not three weeks rent due for lodgings at the time? Had not Mrs. Barber been therefore insulted by the landlady? and was there not a strong likelihood that the baby would soon be left without food altogether? Had Mr. Barber been asked once—twice—a hundred—ten thousand times—if not, how many times to carry the baby up and down the bedroom? Did he wish to throw the infant out of the window; to pitch it under the grate; to dash its brains out against the bed-post? Which of these alternatives would have been most grateful to his paternal heart? No! there was no use his losing his temper here. The Jury had had one specimen of what he was capable. Had not Mr. Barber literally picked his wife's pocket—literally, eh? Let him answer that, and keep his temper. Surely there was nothing to ruffle him in so simple a question as that! There were family grievances on both sides; but would Mr. Barber swear that the scheme, recommended by Viscount Potteen to his adoption, was not one for putting the water in the St. George's Channel into a two-ounce physic-bottle, and taking a spoonful every four hours till the patient told the truth, especially with regard to marriage-licences? Ah! Mr. Barber would swear that—well, *that* assertion might be true. Had the Noble Lord, however, put Mr. B.'s hair into curl-papers, and nearly torn it out by the roots? Then there were family grievances on both sides? Just so. Did Mr. Barber and his club-companions even get intoxicated—beastly drunk, if he would have it—in the hat-room, while his poor wife was giving one of her graceful little musical *ré-unions* up-stairs? No! Would he swear Mrs. Barber had never taxed him with it? Ah! Mr. Battledove would have the truth out of him at last.

So, the learned gentleman handled the witness, and it was beautiful to see the state of rage and exasperation to which he was reduced at last. He was brought, in point of fact, to a condition of hopeless mental imbecility, and could only gasp out—Yes, and No, at random. Mr. Shuttlecock came in to his assistance every now and then with a little squabble as to whether or no a particular question could be put, just to give him time to recover his breath, and knowing, of course, that his objection was perfect moonshine.

Poor Mrs. Barber had listened with great interest to the cross-examination of her husband; in point of fact, she stood up during this portion of the proceedings. I was at first rather inclined to blame her in my own mind for putting herself so prominently forward at such a time; but when I remembered what Mr. Lamb's clerk had told me as to his Governor's (that was the expression he used) tactical arrangements, I saw at once that she was acting under compulsion. She was not to blame, if she could not altogether repress a smile when her brutal husband was dancing about in the pen like a gouty bear, under the influence of Mr. Battledove's more stinging questions.

Indeed, it was very funny to watch him; and if poor Mrs. Barber was gifted with a keen sense of the ludicrous, no one can say that was her fault.

The Misses Barber were next called upon successively to bear their part in this terrible domestic drama. During their examination in chief, as was to be expected, they gave their fierce brother the very best of characters. They had never seen him excited, or guilty of an act of violence, in his life, save upon one occasion, when he had gently cuffed (*molliter manus*, as Dr. Lobb put it) a farmer's boy for flinging stones at some poor pigs which were at the time endeavouring to pick up a precarious existence in the lanes near Poldadek. Neither Miss Harriet nor Miss Jane, however, could entirely approve of their brother Augustus's conduct towards his wife. He held the reins of government with far too slack a hand for their notions of domestic rule. The feeling of a wife towards her husband should be that of awe streaked with veneration; but Mrs. Barber used to box her husband's ears, and call him a "*sweet poppet*"—a term which Miss Harriet characterised as disgusting. Then she was always kissing him before strangers.

By the Court. (In a discontented way.) "What are we coming to, Dr. Lobb? Mrs. Barber's kisses before third parties are not evidence—you can't say they are."

Dr. Lobb. "With all deference, My Lud, I propound the osculation as matter of——"

By the Court. (Maundering.) "No, no. I shall strike that out, unless indeed you can show that the witness was present during the performance: indeed then I don't see what the osculation is to come to—what's the use of it? However, go on."

Dr. Lobb, under his Lordship's direction, elicited from the witness that she actually was present during the terrible scene, and she felt so ashamed that she wished the earth, or, to speak more precisely, the floor of the dining-room at Poldadek had opened and swallowed her up. Both sisters cordially agreed in condemnation of Mrs. Barber for her inordinate love of dress, general extravagance and levity of demeanour. I do not think that either of the ladies will forget their subsequent interviews with Mr. Battledove. How he did tease them about not being married! What could single ladies know of the feelings of married ones? Did Miss Harriet consider that there was any impropriety in a wife's bestowing a chaste salute upon her husband? Well—where was the harm of it? Would she explain? No—she would not explain. Had Miss H. B. ever read the Fable of the Fox and the Grapes? Very pretty reading. The learned gentleman handled Miss Jane much in the same way, asking her, amongst other things, if her views upon the subject of osculation were the same twenty years ago—he would say thirty years ago—as now? He then elicited from the lady at great length her theories with regard to a lady's apparel—detaining her for a considerable period on the subject of stockings. I am bound to say that Mr. Battledove did not at all appear to share the feeling of hilarity which prevailed throughout the Court during the course of this protracted examination. The learned gentleman

glanced around every now and then with an air of great surprise, and indeed went so far as to pray for the interference of the Court when a coarse burst of laughter followed upon one of Miss Jane Barber's replies—which was to the effect that she considered two pairs of stockings per week amply sufficient for any lady's wear! Mr. Battledove was honestly anxious for information upon the point, for gentlemen know nothing of such matters. What could they all be laughing at?

I will not more than record the fact that two other ladies—friends of the family—were called up on Mr. Barber's behalf, to speak to his character. One was a slight, sickly lady, the mother of seventeen children, fourteen being daughters. She was a certain Mrs. Podd, the wife of an officer in the Royal Artillery. Then there was Mrs. General Chutnee—a lady who habitually resided at Cheltenham, but who had enjoyed frequent opportunities of seeing Mr. and Mrs. Barber together. She had never, to all appearance, seen a better assorted union. Mr. Battledove declined to ask these witnesses any questions.

There was a short delay—and then the old Judge commenced his summing up. I was really surprised, considering that the sense of hearing in the learned functionary was somewhat dulled, to find how much of the various examinations he had really transferred to his notes. He began by telling the Jury that here was another illustration of the old proverb "Marry in haste and repent at leisure." If Mr. Barber hadn't run off with Miss Montresor he wouldn't have been—that is he might not have been—before the Divorce Court this day. If Miss Montresor hadn't listened to Mr. Barber she would not have been his wife, and would in all probability have saved herself a great deal of misery. He then went through his notes pointing out to the Jury that throughout—with one exception of which he would speak presently—it was simply a question of whether they believed the lady or the gentleman. This was a case of cross-swearing—as indeed most of these cases were. It would have been more satisfactory if Mrs. Barber had procured evidence from Brussels, Folkestone, &c.,—as to the various instances of *saritia* charged—and he was bound to tell the Jury, that a commission might have been sent over to Brussels to procure the necessary confirmation of Mrs. Barber's statements. The one exception to which he had referred, was the incident that occurred at Cheltenham. Ann Iron had confirmed her mistress's statement so far as to swear that she had seen the bruised arm—she did not go so far as to say she had seen the blow struck. In this way the old Judge passed the evidence in review fairly enough, and bidding the Jury dismiss from their minds all that had been said by counsel on either side which was not supported by evidence, left them to consider their verdict.

The Jury turned round and put their heads together, but before they had been more than a minute in consultation the Judge recalled them for a moment. He wished to inform them that he removed the question of the Corron Tors entirely from their consideration. That was a question for a Court of Equity, and it was competent to Mrs.

Barber—if so advised—to institute a suit for specific performance. The Jury bowed and put their heads together again.

Mr. Lamb had reproduced his fair client in the full sight of the Jury. Mrs. Barber sobbed in a suppressed emphatic way. Mr. Barber was breathing hard—through his nose. I looked to my friend Lamb in an interrogative manner. He winked at me slowly. The three Judges were chatting together. It was an awful moment.

At length the Jury turned round, and, in answer to the regular question, gave in, through their Foreman, a verdict for the Petitioner—**MRS. BARBER WAS FREE!**

Mr. Lamb, with his accustomed deference of

manner, gave his arm to his client, and conducted her out of Court and into the Hall, where the hard women on the steps cheered her as she passed. The lady asked her professional adviser if she had not done it well?—the more so as it was all stuff and nonsense;—Augustus had never beaten her at all. No; she would not go back in Mr. Lamb's carriage. She had her own brougham at the door. I was thunder-struck on arriving at the portal of the Hall to see that the equipage in question was really there—and in it a party with whiskers. “*Only my cousin FREDERICK!*”

That afternoon a small company of sorrowful-looking men paced up and down Westminster Hall, in grim consultation as to what was to be



done under these distressing circumstances. They were British Husbands ! I was there !

Oh ! Flora ! Flora ! Don't !

* * * * *

What came of that consultation, and what were the steps taken by British Husbands to procure a rectification of their frontiers, *will appear in our next and following numbers*, under the title of

THE SCIENCE OF MATRIMONY.

L'Empire c'est la Paix.

GAMMA.
